LONGINUS ON THE SUBLIME

LONGINUS

ON THE SUBLIME

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY

H. L. HAVELL, B.A.

FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

ANDREW LANG

London

MACMILLAN AND CO.

AND NEW YORK

1890

TO

S. H. BUTCHER, Esq., LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

FORMERLY FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

AND OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD

THIS ATTEMPT

TO PRESENT THE GREAT THOUGHTS OF LONGINUS

IN AN ENGLISH FORM

IS DEDICATED

IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE KIND SUPPORT

BUT FOR WHICH IT MIGHT NEVER HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT

AND OF THE BENEFITS OF THAT

INSTRUCTION TO WHICH IT LARGELY OWES

WHATEVER OF SCHOLARLY QUALITY IT MAY POSSESS

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

The text which has been followed in the present Translation is that of Jahn (Bonn, 1867), revised by Vahlen, and republished in 1884. In several instances it has been found necessary to diverge from Vahlen's readings, such divergencies being duly pointed out in the Notes.

One word as to the aim and scope of the present Translation. My object throughout has been to make Longinus speak in English, to preserve, as far as lay in my power, the noble fire and lofty tone of the original. How to effect this, without being betrayed into a loose paraphrase, was an exceedingly difficult problem. The style of Longinus is in a high degree original, occasionally running into strange eccentricities of language; and no one who has not made the attempt can realise the difficulty of giving anything like an adequate version of the more elaborate passages. These considerations I submit to those to whom I may seem at first sight to have handled my text too freely.

My best thanks are due to Dr. Butcher, Professor of Greek in the University of Edinburgh, who from first to last has shown a lively interest in the present undertaking which I can never sufficiently acknowledge. He has read the Translation throughout, and acting on his suggestions I have been able in numerous instances to bring my version into a closer conformity with the original.

I have also to acknowledge the kindness of the distinguished writer who has contributed the Introduction, and who, in spite of the heavy demands on his time, has lent his powerful support to help on the work of one who was personally unknown to him.

In conclusion, I may be allowed to express a hope that the present attempt may contribute something to reawaken an interest in an unjustly neglected classic.

ANALYSIS

THE Treatise on the Sublime may be divided into six Parts, as follows :—

I.—cc. i, ii. The Work of Caecilius. Definition of the Sublime. Whether Sublimity falls within the rules of Art.

II.—cc. iii-v. [The beginning lost.] Vices of Style opposed to the Sublime : Affectation, Bombast, False Sentiment, Frigid Conceits. The cause of such defects.

III.—cc. vi, vii. The true Sublime, what it is, and how distinguishable.

IV.—cc. viii-xl. Five Sources of the Sublime (how Sublimity is related to Passion, c. viii, §§ 2-4).

(i.) Grandeur of Thought, cc. ix-xv.

a. As the natural outcome of nobility of soul. Examples (c. ix).

b. Choice of the most striking circumstances. Sappho's Ode (c. x).

c. Amplification. Plato compared with Demosthenes, Demosthenes with Cicero (cc. xi-xiii).

d. Imitation (cc. xiii, xiv).

e. Imagery (c. xv).

(ii.) Power of moving the Passions (omitted here, because dealt with in a separate work).

(iii.) Figures of Speech (cc. xvi-xxix).

a. The Figure of Adjuration (c. xvi). The Art to conceal Art (c. xvii).
b. Rhetorical Question (c. xviii).
c. Asyndeton (c. xix-xxi).
d. Hyperbaton (c. xxii).
e. Changes of Number, Person, Tense, etc. (cc. xxiii-xxvii).
f. Periphrasis (cc. xxviii, xxix).

(iv.) Graceful Expression (cc. xxx-xxxii and xxxvii, xxxviii).

a. Choice of Words (c. xxx).
b. Ornaments of Style (cc. xxxi, xxxii and xxxvii, xxxviii).

(α) On the use of Familiar Words (c. xxxi).
(β) Metaphors; accumulated; extract from the *Timaeus*; abuse of Metaphors; certain tasteless conceits blamed in Plato (c. xxxii).

[Hence arises a digression (cc. xxxiii-xxxvi) on the spirit in which we should judge of the faults of great authors. Demosthenes compared with Hyperides, Lysias with Plato. Sublimity, however far from faultless, to be always preferred to a tame correctness.]

(γ) Comparisons and Similes [lost] (c. xxxvii).
(δ) Hyperbole (c. xxxviii).

(v.) Dignity and Elevation of Structure (cc. xxxix, xl).

a. Modulation of Syllables (c. xxxix).
b. Composition (c. xl).

V.—cc. xli-xliii. Vices of Style destructive to Sublimity.

(i.) Abuse of Rhythm
(ii.) Broken and Jerky Clauses
(iii.) Undue Prolixity
} (cc. xli, xlii).

(iv.) Improper Use of Familiar Words. Anti-climax. Example from Theopompus (c. xliii).

VI.—Why this age is so barren of great authors—whether the cause is to be sought in a despotic form of government, or, as Longinus rather thinks, in the prevailing corruption of manners, and in the sordid and paltry views of life which almost universally prevail (c. xliv).

INTRODUCTION

TREATISE ON THE SUBLIME

BOILEAU, in his introduction to his version of the ancient Treatise on the Sublime, says that he is making no valueless present to his age. Not valueless, to a generation which talks much about style and method in literature, should be this new rendering of the noble fragment, long attributed to Longinus, the Greek tutor and political adviser of Zenobia. There is, indeed, a modern English version by Spurden,[1] but that is now rare, and seldom comes into the market. Rare, too, is Vaucher's critical essay (1854), which is unlucky, as the French and English books both contain valuable disquisitions on the age of the author of the Treatise. This excellent work has had curious fortunes. It is never quoted nor referred to by any extant classical writer, and, among the many books attributed by Suidas to Longinus, it is not mentioned.

[1] Longmans, London, 1836.

Decidedly the old world has left no more noble relic of criticism. Yet the date of the book is obscure, and it did not come into the hands of the learned in modern Europe till Robertelli and Manutius each published editions in 1544. From that time the Treatise has often been printed, edited, translated; but opinion still floats undecided about its origin and period. Does it belong to the age of Augustus, or to the age of Aurelian? Is the author the historical Longinus—the friend of Plotinus, the tutor of Porphyry, the victim of Aurelian,—or have we here a work by an unknown hand more than two centuries earlier? Manuscripts and traditions are here of little service. The oldest manuscript, that of Paris, is regarded as the parent of the rest. It is a small quarto of 414 pages, whereof 335 are occupied by the "Problems" of Aristotle. Several leaves have been lost, hence the fragmentary character of the essay. The Paris MS. has an index, first mentioning the "Problems," and then ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ Η ΛΟΓΓΙΝΟΥ ΠΕΡΙ ΥΨΟΥΣ, that is, "The work of Dionysius, or of Longinus, about the Sublime."

On this showing the transcriber of the MS. considered its authorship dubious. Supposing that the author was Dionysius, which of the many writers of that name was he? Again, if he was Longinus, how far does his work tally with the

characteristics ascribed to that late critic, and peculiar to his age?

About this Longinus, while much is written, little is certainly known. Was he a descendant of a freedman of one of the Cassii Longini, or of an eastern family with a mixture of Greek and Roman blood? The author of the Treatise avows himself a Greek, and apologises, as a Greek, for attempting an estimate of Cicero. Longinus himself was the nephew and heir of Fronto, a Syrian rhetorician of Emesa. Whether Longinus was born there or not, and when he was born, are things uncertain. Porphyry, born in 233 A.D., was his pupil: granting that Longinus was twenty years Porphyry's senior, he must have come into the world about 213 A.D. He travelled much, studied in many cities, and was the friend of the mystic Neoplatonists, Plotinus and Ammonius. The former called him "a philologist, not a philosopher." Porphyry shows us Longinus at a supper where the plagiarisms of Greek writers are discussed—a topic dear to trivial or spiteful mediocrity. He is best known by his death. As the Greek secretary of Zenobia he inspired a haughty answer from the queen to Aurelian, who therefore put him to death. Many rhetorical and philosophic treatises are ascribed to him, whereof only fragments survive. Did he write the Treatise on the Sublime? Modern students prefer to believe that the famous

essay is, if not by Plutarch, as some hold, at least by some author of his age, the age of the early Caesars.

The arguments for depriving Longinus, Zenobia's tutor, of the credit of the Treatise lie on the surface, and may be briefly stated. He addresses his work as a letter to a friend, probably a Roman pupil, Terentianus, with whom he has been reading a work on the Sublime by Caecilius. Now Caecilius, a voluminous critic, certainly lived not later than Plutarch, who speaks of him with a sneer. It is unlikely then that an author, two centuries later, would make the old book of Caecilius the starting-point of his own. He would probably have selected some recent or even contemporary rhetorician. Once more, the writer of the Treatise of the Sublime quotes no authors later than the Augustan period. Had he lived as late as the historical Longinus he would surely have sought examples of bad style, if not of good, from the works of the Silver Age. Perhaps he would hardly have resisted the malicious pleasure of censuring the failures among whom he lived. On the other hand, if he cites no late author, no classical author cites him, in spite of the excellence of his book. But we can hardly draw the inference that he was of late date from this purely negative evidence.

Again, he describes, in a very interesting and

earnest manner, the characteristics of his own period (Translation, pp. 82-86). Why, he is asked, has genius become so rare? There are many clever men, but scarce any highly exalted and wide-reaching genius. Has eloquence died with liberty? "We have learned the lesson of a benignant despotism, and have never tasted freedom." The author answers that it is easy and characteristic of men to blame the present times. Genius may have been corrupted, not by a world-wide peace, but by love of gain and pleasure, passions so strong that "I fear, for such men as we are it is better to serve than to be free. If our appetites were let loose altogether against our neighbours, they would be like wild beasts uncaged, and bring a deluge of calamity on the whole civilised world." Melancholy words, and appropriate to our own age, when cleverness is almost universal, and genius rare indeed, and the choice between liberty and servitude hard to make, were the choice within our power.

But these words assuredly apply closely to the peaceful period of Augustus, when Virgil and Horace "praising their tyrant sang," not to the confused age of the historical Longinus. Much has been said of the allusion to "the Lawgiver of the Jews" as "no ordinary person," but that remark might have been made by a heathen acquainted with the Septuagint, at either of the disputed dates.

On the other hand, our author (Section XIII) quotes the critical ideas of "Ammonius and his school," as to the debt of Plato to Homer. Now the historical Longinus was a friend of the Neoplatonist teacher (not writer), Ammonius Saccas. If we could be sure that the Ammonius of the Treatise was this Ammonius, the question would be settled in favour of the late date. Our author would be that Longinus who inspired Zenobia to resist Aurelian, and who perished under his revenge. But Ammonius is not a very uncommon name, and we have no reason to suppose that the Neoplatonist Ammonius busied himself with the literary criticism of Homer and Plato. There was, among others, an Egyptian Ammonius, the tutor of Plutarch.

These are the mass of the arguments on both sides. M. Egger sums them up thus: "After carefully examining the tradition of the MSS., and the one very late testimony in favour of Longinus, I hesitated for long as to the date of this precious work. In 1854 M. Vaucher[1] inclined me to believe that Plutarch was the author.[2] All seems to concur towards the opinion that, if not Plutarch, at least one of his contemporaries wrote the most

[1] *Etude Critique sur la traité du Sublime et les ecrits de Longin.* Geneva.

[2] See also M. Naudet, *Journal des Savants*, Mars 1838, and M. Egger, in the same Journal, May 1884.

original Greek essay in its kind since the *Rhetoric* and *Poetic* of Aristotle."[1]

We may, on the whole, agree that the nobility of the author's thought, his habit of quoting nothing more recent than the Augustan age, and his description of his own time, which seems so pertinent to that epoch, mark him as its child rather than as a great critic lost among the *somnia Pythagorea* of the Neoplatonists. On the other hand, if the author be a man of high heart and courage, as he seems, so was that martyr of independence, Longinus. Not without scruple, then, can we deprive Zenobia's tutor of the glory attached so long to his name.

Whatever its date, and whoever its author may be, the Treatise is fragmentary. The lost parts may very probably contain the secret of its period and authorship. The writer, at the request of his friend, Terentianus, and dissatisfied with the essay of Caecilius, sets about examining the nature of the Sublime in poetry and oratory. To the latter he assigns, as is natural, much more literary importance than we do, in an age when there is so little oratory of literary merit, and so much popular rant. The subject of sublimity must naturally have attracted a writer whose own moral nature was

[1] Egger, *Histoire de la Critique chez les Grecs*, p. 426. Paris, 1887.

pure and lofty, who was inclined to discover in moral qualities the true foundation of the highest literary merit. Even in his opening words he strikes the keynote of his own disposition, where he approves the saying that "the points in which we resemble the divine nature are benevolence and love of truth." Earlier or later born, he must have lived in the midst of literary activity, curious, eager, occupied with petty questions and petty quarrels, concerned, as men in the best times are not very greatly concerned, with questions of technique and detail. Cut off from politics, people found in composition a field for their activity. We can readily fancy what literature becomes when not only its born children, but the minor busybodies whose natural place is politics, excluded from these, pour into the study of letters. Love of notoriety, vague activity, fantastic indolence, we may be sure, were working their will in the sacred close of the Muses. There were literary sets, jealousies, recitations of new poems; there was a world of amateurs, if there were no papers and paragraphs. To this world the author speaks like a voice from the older and graver age of Greece. If he lived late, we can imagine that he did not quote contemporaries, not because he did not know them, but because he estimated them correctly. He may have suffered, as we suffer, from critics who, of all the world's literature, know only

"the last thing out," and who take that as a standard for the past, to them unfamiliar, and for the hidden future. As we are told that excellence is not of the great past, but of the present, not in the classical masters, but in modern Muscovites, Portuguese, or American young women, so the author of the Treatise may have been troubled by Asiatic eloquence, now long forgotten, by names of which not a shadow survives. He, on the other hand, has a right to be heard because he has practised a long familiarity with what is old and good. His mind has ever been in contact with masterpieces, as the mind of a critic should be, as the mind of a reviewer seldom is, for the reviewer has to hurry up and down inspecting new literary adventurers. Not among their experiments will he find a touchstone of excellence, a test of greatness, and that test will seldom be applied to contemporary performances. What is the test, after all, of the Sublime, by which our author means the truly great, the best and most passionate thoughts, nature's high and rare inspirations, expressed in the best chosen words? He replies that "a just judgment of style is the final fruit of long experience." "Much has he travelled in the realms of gold."

The word "style" has become a weariness to think upon; so much is said, so much is printed about the art of expression, about methods, tricks, and

turns; so many people, without any long experience, set up to be judges of style, on the strength of having admired two or three modern and often rather fantastic writers. About our author, however, we know that his experience has been long, and of the best, that he does not speak from a hasty acquaintance with a few contemporary *précieux* and *précieuses*. The bad writing of his time he traces, as much of our own may be traced, to "the pursuit of novelty in thought," or rather in expression. "It is this that has turned the brain of nearly all our learned world to-day." "Gardons nous d'écrire trop bien," he might have said, "c'est la pire manière qu'il y'ait d'écrire."[1]

The Sublime, with which he concerns himself, is "a certain loftiness and excellence of language," which "takes the reader out of himself. . . . The Sublime, acting with an imperious and irresistible force, sways every reader whether he will or no." In its own sphere the Sublime does what "natural magic" does in the poetical rendering of nature, and perhaps in the same scarcely-to-be-analysed fashion. Whether this art can be taught or not is a question which the author treats with modesty. Then, as now, people were denying (and not unjustly) that this art can be taught by rule. The author does not go so far as to say that Criticism, "unlike

[1] M. Anatole France.

Justice, does little evil, and little good; that is, *if* to entertain for a moment delicate and curious minds is to do little good." He does not rate his business so low as that. He admits that the inspiration comes from genius, from nature. But "an author can only learn from art when he is to abandon himself to the direction of his genius." Nature must "burst out with a kind of fine madness and divine inspiration." The madness must be *fine.* How can art aid it to this end? By knowledge of, by sympathy and emulation with, "the great poets and prose writers of the past." By these we may be inspired, as the Pythoness by Apollo. From the genius of the past "an effluence breathes upon us." The writer is not to imitate, but to keep before him the perfection of what has been done by the greatest poets. He is to look on them as beacons; he is to keep them as exemplars or ideals. He is to place them as judges of his work. "How would Homer, how would Demosthenes, have been affected by what I have written?" This is practical counsel, and even the most florid modern author, after polishing a paragraph, may tear it up when he has asked himself, "What would Addison have said about this eloquence of mine, or Sainte Beuve, or Mr. Matthew Arnold?" In this way what we call inspiration, that is the performance of the heated mind, perhaps working at its best, perhaps over-

straining itself, and overstating its idea, might really be regulated. But they are few who consider so closely, fewer perhaps they who have the heart to cut out their own fine or refined things. Again, our author suggests another criterion. We are, as in Lamb's phrase, "to write for antiquity," with the souls of poets dead and gone for our judges. But we are also to write for the future, asking with what feelings posterity will read us—if it reads us at all. This is a good discipline. We know by practice what will hit some contemporary tastes; we know the measure of smartness, say, or the delicate flippancy, or the sentence with "a dying fall." But one should also know that these are fancies of the hour—these and the touch of archaism, and the spinster-like and artificial precision, which seem to be points in some styles of the moment. Such reflections as our author bids us make, with a little self-respect added, may render our work less popular and effective, and certainly are not likely to carry it down to remote posterity. But all such reflections, and action in accordance with what they teach, are elements of literary self-respect. It is hard to be conscientious, especially hard for him who writes much, and of necessity, and for bread. But conscience is never to be obeyed with ease, though the ease grows with the obedience. The book attributed to Longinus will not have missed

its mark if it reminds us that, in literature at least, for conscience there is yet a place, possibly even a reward, though that is unessential. By virtue of reasonings like these, and by insisting that nobility of style is, as it were, the bloom on nobility of soul, the Treatise on the Sublime becomes a tonic work, wholesome to be read by young authors and old. "It is natural in us to feel our souls lifted up by the true Sublime, and, conceiving a sort of generous exultation, to be filled with joy and pride, as though we had ourselves originated the ideas which we read." Here speaks his natural disinterested greatness; the author himself is here sublime, and teaches by example as well as precept, for few things are purer than a pure and ardent admiration. The critic is even confident enough to expect to find his own nobility in others, believing that what is truly Sublime "will always please, and please all readers." And in this universal acceptance by the populace and the literate, by critics and creators, by young and old, he finds the true external canon of sublimity. The verdict lies not with contemporaries, but with the large public, not with the little set of dilettanti, but must be spoken by all. Such verdicts assign the crown to Shakespeare and Molière, to Homer and Cervantes; we should not clamorously anticipate this favourable judgment for Bryant or Emerson, nor for the greatest of our own contem-

poraries. Boileau so much misconceived these lofty ideas that he regarded "Longinus's" judgment as solely that "of good sense," and held that, in his time, "nothing was good or bad till he had spoken." But there is far more than good sense, there is high poetic imagination and moral greatness, in the criticism of our author, who certainly would have rejected Boileau's compliment when he selects Longinus as a literary dictator.

Indeed we almost grudge our author's choice of a subject. He who wrote that "it was not in nature's plan for us, her children, to be base and ignoble; no, she brought us into life as into some great field of contest," should have had another field of contest than literary criticism. It is almost a pity that we have to doubt the tradition, according to which our author was Longinus, and, being but a rhetorician, greatly dared and bravely died. Taking literature for his theme, he wanders away into grammar, into considerations of tropes and figures, plurals and singulars, trumpery mechanical pedantries, as we think now, to whom grammar is no longer, as of old, "a new invented game." Moreover, he has to give examples of the faults opposed to sublimity, he has to dive into and search the bathos, to dally over examples of the bombastic, the over-wrought, the puerile. These faults are not the sins of "minds generous and aspiring," and we have them with us

always. The additions to Boileau's preface (Paris, 1772) contain abundance of examples of faults from Voiture, Mascaron, Bossuet, selected by M. de St. Marc, who no doubt found abundance of entertainment in the chastising of these obvious affectations. It hardly seems the proper work for an author like him who wrote the Treatise on the Sublime. But it is tempting, even now, to give contemporary instances of skill in the Art of Sinking—modern cases of bombast, triviality, false rhetoric. "Speaking generally, it would seem that bombast is one of the hardest things to avoid in writing," says an author who himself avoids it so well. Bombast is the voice of sham passion, the shadow of an insincere attitude. "Even the wretched phantom who still bore the imperial title stooped to pay this ignominious blackmail," cries bombast in Macaulay's *Lord Clive.* The picture of a phantom who is not only a phantom but wretched, stooping to pay blackmail which is not only blackmail but ignominious, may divert the reader and remind him that the faults of the past are the faults of the present. Again, "The desolate islands along the sea-coast, overgrown by noxious vegetation, and swarming with deer and tigers"—do, what does any one suppose, perform what forlorn part in the economy of the world? Why, they "supply the cultivated districts with abundance of salt." It is as comic as—

"And thou Dalhousie, thou great God of War,
Lieutenant-Colonel to the Earl of Mar."

Bombast "transcends the Sublime," and falls on the other side. Our author gives more examples of puerility. "Slips of this sort are made by those who, aiming at brilliancy, polish, and especially attractiveness, are landed in paltriness and silly affectation." Some modern instances we had chosen; the field of choice is large and richly fertile in those blossoms. But the reader may be left to twine a garland of them for himself; to select from contemporaries were invidious, and might provoke retaliation. When our author censures Timaeus for saying that Alexander took less time to annex Asia than Isocrates spent in writing an oration, to bid the Greeks attack Persia, we know what he would have thought of Macaulay's antithesis. He blames Xenophon for a poor pun, and Plato, less justly, for mere figurative badinage. It would be an easy task to ransack contemporaries, even great contemporaries, for similar failings, for pomposity, for the florid, for sentences like processions of intoxicated torch-bearers, for pedantic display of cheap erudition, for misplaced flippancy, for nice derangement of epitaphs wherein no adjective is used which is appropriate. With a library of cultivated American novelists and uncultivated English romancers at hand, with our own voluminous

essays, and the essays and histories and "art criticisms" of our neighbours to draw from, no student need lack examples of what is wrong. He who writes, reflecting on his own innumerable sins, can but beat his breast, cry *Mea Culpa*, and resist the temptation to beat the breasts of his coevals. There are not many authors, there have never been many, who did not need to turn over the treatise of the Sublime by day and night.[1]

As a literary critic of Homer our author is most interesting even in his errors. He compares the poet of the *Odyssey* to the sunset: the *Iliad* is noonday work, the *Odyssey* is touched with the glow of evening—the softness and the shadows. "Old age naturally leans," like childhood, "towards the fabulous." The tide has flowed back, and left dim bulks of things on the long shadowy sands. Yet he makes an exception, oddly enough, in favour of the story of the Cyclops, which really is the most fabulous and crude of the fairy tales in the first and greatest of romances. The Slaying of the Wooers,

[1] The examples of bombast used to be drawn as late as Spurden's translation (1836), from Lee, from *Troilus and Cressida*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Cowley and Crashaw furnished instances of conceits; Waller, Young, and Hayley of frigidity; and Darwin of affectation.

> "What beaux and beauties crowd the gaudy groves,
> And woo and win their *vegetable loves*"—

a phrase adopted—"vapid vegetable loves"—by the Laureate in "The Talking Oak."

that admirable fight, worthy of a saga, he thinks too improbable, and one of the "trifles into which second childhood is apt to be betrayed." He fancies that the aged Homer had "lost his power of depicting the passions"; in fact, he is hardly a competent or sympathetic critic of the *Odyssey*. Perhaps he had lived among Romans till he lost his sense of humour; perhaps he never had any to lose. On the other hand, he preserved for us that inestimable and not to be translated fragment of Sappho—*φαίνεταί μοι κῆνος ἴσος θεοῖσιν.*

It is curious to find him contrasting Apollonius Rhodius as faultless, with Homer as great but faulty. The "faultlessness" of Apollonius is not his merit, for he is often tedious, and he has little skill in selection; moreover, he is deliberately antiquarian, if not pedantic. His true merit is in his original and, as we think, modern telling of a love tale—pure, passionate, and tender, the first in known literature. Medea is often sublime, and always touching. But it is not on these merits that our author lingers; he loves only the highest literature, and, though he finds spots on the sun and faults in Homer, he condones them as oversights passed in the poet's "contempt of little things."

Such for us to-day are the lessons of Longinus. He traces dignity and fire of style to dignity and fire of soul. He detects and denounces the very

faults of which, in each other, all writers are conscious, and which he brings home to ourselves. He proclaims the essential merits of conviction, and of selection. He sets before us the noblest examples of the past, most welcome in a straining age which tries already to live in the future. He admonishes and he inspires. He knows the "marvellous power and enthralling charm of appropriate and striking words" without dropping into mere word-tasting. "Beautiful words are the very light of thought," he says, but does not maunder about the "colour" of words, in the style of the decadence. And then he "leaves this generation to its fate," and calmly turns himself to the work that lies nearest his hand.

To us he is as much a moral as a literary teacher. We admire that Roman greatness of soul in a Greek, and the character of this unknown man, who carried the soul of a poet, the heart of a hero under the gown of a professor. He was one of those whom books cannot debilitate, nor a life of study incapacitate for the study of life.

A. L.

I

THE treatise of Caecilius on the Sublime, when, as 1
you remember, my dear Terentian, we examined it together, seemed to us to be beneath the dignity of the whole subject, to fail entirely in seizing the salient points, and to offer little profit (which should be the principal aim of every writer) for the trouble of its perusal. There are two things essential to a technical treatise: the first is to define the subject; the second (I mean second in order, as it is by much the first in importance) to point out how and by what methods we may become masters of it ourselves. And yet Caecilius, while wasting his efforts in a thousand illustrations of the nature of the Sublime, as though here we were quite in the dark, somehow passes by as immaterial the question how we might be able to exalt our own genius to a certain degree of progress in sublimity. However, perhaps it would be fairer to commend this
writer's intelligence and zeal in themselves, instead 2
of blaming him for his omissions. And since you

have bidden me also to put together, if only for your entertainment, a few notes on the subject of the Sublime, let me see if there is anything in my speculations which promises advantage to men of affairs. In you, dear friend—such is my confidence in your abilities, and such the part which becomes you—I look for a sympathising and discerning[1] critic of the several parts of my treatise. For that was a just remark of his who pronounced that the points in which we resemble the divine nature are benevolence and love of truth.

3 As I am addressing a person so accomplished in literature, I need only state, without enlarging further on the matter, that the Sublime, wherever it occurs, consists in a certain loftiness and excellence of language, and that it is by this, and this only, that the greatest poets and prose-writers have gained eminence, and won themselves a lasting
4 place in the Temple of Fame. A lofty passage does not convince the reason of the reader, but takes him out of himself. That which is admirable ever confounds our judgment, and eclipses that which is merely reasonable or agreeable. To believe or not is usually in our own power; but the Sublime, acting with an imperious and irresistible force, sways every reader whether he will or no. Skill in invention, lucid arrangement and disposition of facts,

[1] Reading *φιλοφρονέστατα καί ἀληθέστατα.*

are appreciated not by one passage, or by two, but gradually manifest themselves in the general structure of a work; but a sublime thought, if happily timed, illumines[1] an entire subject with the vividness of a lightning-flash, and exhibits the whole power of the orator in a moment of time. Your own experience, I am sure, my dearest Terentian, would enable you to illustrate these and similar points of doctrine.

II

The first question which presents itself for solution is whether there is any art which can teach sublimity or loftiness in writing. For some hold generally that there is mere delusion in attempting to reduce such subjects to technical rules. "The Sublime," they tell us, "is born in a man, and not to be acquired by instruction; genius is the only master who can teach it. The vigorous products of nature" (such is their view) "are weakened and in every respect debased, when robbed of their flesh and blood by frigid technicalities." But I maintain 2
that the truth can be shown to stand otherwise in this matter. Let us look at the case in this way; Nature in her loftier and more passionate moods, while detesting all appearance of restraint, is not

[1] Reading διεφώτισεν.

wont to show herself utterly wayward and reckless; and though in all cases the vital informing principle is derived from her, yet to determine the right degree and the right moment, and to contribute the precision of practice and experience, is the peculiar province of scientific method. The great passions, when left to their own blind and rash impulses without the control of reason, are in the same danger as a ship let drive at random without ballast. Often they need the spur, but sometimes also the
3 curb. The remark of Demosthenes with regard to human life in general,—that the greatest of all blessings is to be fortunate, but next to that and equal in importance is to be well advised,—for good fortune is utterly ruined by the absence of good counsel,—may be applied to literature, if we substitute genius for fortune, and art for counsel. Then, again (and this is the most important point of all), a writer can only learn from art when he is to abandon himself to the direction of his genius.[1]

These are the considerations which I submit to the unfavourable critic of such useful studies. Perhaps they may induce him to alter his opinion as to the vanity and idleness of our present investigations.

[1] Literally, "But the most important point of all is that the actual fact that there are some parts of literature which are in the power of natural genius alone, must be learnt from no other source than from art."

III

. . . "And let them check the stove's long tongues of fire:
For if I see one tenant of the hearth,
I'll thrust within one curling torrent flame,
And bring that roof in ashes to the ground:
But now not yet is sung my noble lay." [1]

Such phrases cease to be tragic, and become burlesque,—I mean phrases like "curling torrent flames" and "vomiting to heaven," and representing Boreas as a piper, and so on. Such expressions, and such images, produce an effect of confusion and obscurity, not of energy; and if each separately be examined under the light of criticism, what seemed terrible gradually sinks into absurdity. Since then, even in tragedy, where the natural dignity of the subject makes a swelling diction allowable, we cannot pardon a tasteless grandiloquence, how much more incongruous must it seem in sober prose! Hence 2
we laugh at those fine words of Gorgias of Leontini, such as "Xerxes the Persian Zeus" and "vultures, those living tombs," and at certain conceits of Callisthenes which are high-flown rather than sublime, and at some in Cleitarchus more ludicrous still—a writer whose frothy style tempts us to travesty Sophocles and say, "He blows a little pipe,

[1] Aeschylus in his lost *Oreithyia*.

and blows it ill." The same faults may be observed in Amphicrates and Hegesias and Matris, who in their frequent moments (as they think) of inspiration, instead of playing the genius are simply playing the fool.

3 Speaking generally, it would seem that bombast is one of the hardest things to avoid in writing. For all those writers who are ambitious of a lofty style, through dread of being convicted of feebleness and poverty of language, slide by a natural gradation into the opposite extreme. "Who fails in great
4 endeavour, nobly fails," is their creed. Now bulk, when hollow and affected, is always objectionable, whether in material bodies or in writings, and in danger of producing on us an impression of littleness: "nothing," it is said, "is drier than a man with the dropsy."

The characteristic, then, of bombast is that it transcends the Sublime: but there is another fault diametrically opposed to grandeur: this is called puerility, and it is the failing of feeble and narrow minds,—indeed, the most ignoble of all vices in writing. By puerility we mean a pedantic habit of mind, which by over-elaboration ends in frigidity. Slips of this sort are made by those who, aiming at brilliancy, polish, and especially attractiveness, are
5 landed in paltriness and silly affectation. Closely associated with this is a third sort of vice, in deal-

ing with the passions, which Theodorus used to call false sentiment, meaning by that an ill-timed and empty display of emotion, where no emotion is called for, or of greater emotion than the situation warrants. Thus we often see an author hurried by the tumult of his mind into tedious displays of mere personal feeling which has no connection with the subject. Yet how justly ridiculous must an author appear, whose most violent transports leave his readers quite cold! However, I will dismiss this subject, as I intend to devote a separate work to the treatment of the pathetic in writing.

IV

The last of the faults which I mentioned is frequently observed in Timaeus—I mean the fault of frigidity. In other respects he is an able writer, and sometimes not unsuccessful in the loftier style; a man of wide knowledge, and full of ingenuity; a most bitter critic of the failings of others—but unhappily blind to his own. In his eagerness to be always striking out new thoughts he frequently falls into the most childish absurdities. I will only 2
instance one or two passages, as most of them have been pointed out by Caecilius. Wishing to say something very fine about Alexander the Great he

speaks of him as a man "who annexed the whole of Asia in fewer years than Isocrates spent in writing his panegyric oration in which he urges the Greeks to make war on Persia." How strange is the comparison of the "great Emathian conqueror" with an Athenian rhetorician! By this mode of reasoning it is plain that the Spartans were very inferior to Isocrates in courage, since it took them thirty years to conquer Messene, while he finished the composi-
3 tion of this harangue in ten. Observe, too, his language on the Athenians taken in Sicily. "They paid the penalty for their impious outrage on Hermes in mutilating his statues; and the chief agent in their destruction was one who was descended on his father's side from the injured deity —Hermocrates, son of Hermon." I wonder, my dearest Terentian, how he omitted to say of the tyrant Dionysius that for his impiety towards Zeus and Herakles he was deprived of his power by
4 Dion and Herakleides. Yet why speak of Timaeus, when even men like Xenophon and Plato—the very demi-gods of literature—though they had sat at the feet of Socrates, sometimes forgot themselves in the pursuit of such paltry conceits. The former, in his account of the Spartan Polity, has these words: "Their voice you would no more hear than if they were of marble, their gaze is as immovable as if they were cast in bronze; you would deem them

more modest than the very maidens in their eyes.[1]
To speak of the pupils of the eye as "modest
maidens" was a piece of absurdity becoming Amphi-
crates[2] rather than Xenophon. And then what a
strange delusion to suppose that modesty is always
without exception expressed in the eye! whereas it
is commonly said that there is nothing by which an
impudent fellow betrays his character so much as
by the expression of his eyes. Thus Achilles
addresses Agamemnon in the *Iliad* as "drunkard,
with eye of dog."[3] Timaeus, however, with that 5
want of judgment which characterises plagiarists,
could not leave to Xenophon the possession of even
this piece of frigidity. In relating how Agathocles
carried off his cousin, who was wedded to another
man, from the festival of the unveiling, he asks,
"Who could have done such a deed, unless he had
harlots instead of maidens in his eyes?" And Plato 6
himself, elsewhere so supreme a master of style,
meaning to describe certain recording tablets, says,
"They shall write, and deposit in the temples
memorials of cypress wood";[4] and again, "Then
concerning walls, Megillus, I give my vote with
Sparta that we should let them lie asleep within
the ground, and not awaken them."[5] And Herod- 7
otus falls pretty much under the same censure,

[1] *Xen. de Rep. Laced.* 3, 5. [2] C. iii. sect. 2.
[3] *Il.* i. 225. [4] *Plat. de Legg.* v. 741, C. [5] *Ib.* vi. 778, D.

when he speaks of beautiful women as "tortures to the eye,"[1] though here there is some excuse, as the speakers in this passage are drunken barbarians. Still, even from dramatic motives, such errors in taste should not be permitted to deface the pages of an immortal work.

V

Now all these glaring improprieties of language may be traced to one common root—the pursuit of novelty in thought. It is this that has turned the brain of nearly all the learned world of to-day. Human blessings and human ills commonly flow from the same source: and, to apply this principle to literature, those ornaments of style, those sublime and delightful images, which contribute to success, are the foundation and the origin, not only of excellence, but also of failure. It is thus with the figures called transitions, and hyperboles, and the use of plurals for singulars. I shall show presently the dangers which they seem to involve. Our next task, therefore, must be to propose and to settle the question how we may avoid the faults of style related to sublimity.

[1] v. 18.

VI

Our best hope of doing this will be first of all to grasp some definite theory and criterion of the true Sublime. Nevertheless this is a hard matter; for a just judgment of style is the final fruit of long experience; still, I believe that the way I shall indicate will enable us to distinguish between the true and false Sublime, so far as it can be done by rule.

VII

It is proper to observe that in human life nothing is truly great which is despised by all elevated minds. For example, no man of sense can regard wealth, honour, glory, and power, or any of those things which are surrounded by a great external parade of pomp and circumstance, as the highest blessings, seeing that merely to despise such things is a blessing of no common order: certainly those who possess them are admired much less than those who, having the opportunity to acquire them, through greatness of soul neglect it. Now let us apply this principle to the Sublime in poetry or in prose; let us ask in all cases, is it merely a specious sublimity? is this gorgeous exterior a mere false and clumsy pageant,

which if laid open will be found to conceal nothing
but emptiness? for if so, a noble mind will scorn
2 instead of admiring it. It is natural to us to feel
our souls lifted up by the true Sublime, and con-
ceiving a sort of generous exultation to be filled
with joy and pride, as though we had ourselves
3 originated the ideas which we read. If then any
work, on being repeatedly submitted to the judgment
of an acute and cultivated critic, fails to dispose his
mind to lofty ideas; if the thoughts which it suggests
do not extend beyond what is actually expressed;
and if, the longer you read it, the less you think of
it,—there can be here no true sublimity, when the
effect is not sustained beyond the mere act of
perusal. But when a passage is pregnant in sugges-
tion, when it is hard, nay impossible, to distract the
attention from it, and when it takes a strong and
lasting hold on the memory, then we may be sure
4 that we have lighted on the true Sublime. In
general we may regard those words as truly noble
and sublime which always please and please all
readers. For when the same book always produces
the same impression on all who read it, whatever be
the difference in their pursuits, their manner of life,
their aspirations, their ages, or their language, such
a harmony of opposites gives irresistible authority
to their favourable verdict.

VIII

I shall now proceed to enumerate the five principal sources, as we may call them, from which almost all sublimity is derived, assuming, of course, the preliminary gift on which all these five sources depend, namely, command of language. The first and the most important is (1) grandeur of thought, as I have pointed out elsewhere in my work on Xenophon. The second is (2) a vigorous and spirited treatment of the passions. These two conditions of sublimity depend mainly on natural endowments, whereas those which follow derive assistance from Art. The third is (3) a certain artifice in the employment of figures, which are of two kinds, figures of thought and figures of speech. The fourth is (4) dignified expression, which is subdivided into (*a*) the proper choice of words, and (*b*) the use of metaphors and other ornaments of diction. The fifth cause of sublimity, which embraces all those preceding, is (5) majesty and elevation of structure. Let us consider what is involved in each of these five forms separately.

I must first, however, remark that some of these five divisions are omitted by Caecilius; for instance,
he says nothing about the passions. Now if he 2
made this omission from a belief that the Sublime

and the Pathetic are one and the same thing, holding them to be always coexistent and interdependent, he is in error. Some passions are found which, so far from being lofty, are actually low, such as pity, grief, fear; and conversely, sublimity is often not in the least affecting, as we may see (among innumerable other instances) in those bold expressions of our great poet on the sons of Aloëus—

> "Highly they raged
> To pile huge Ossa on the Olympian peak,
> And Pelion with all his waving trees
> On Ossa's crest to raise, and climb the sky;"

and the yet more tremendous climax—

> "And now had they accomplished it."

3 And in orators, in all passages dealing with panegyric, and in all the more imposing and declamatory places, dignity and sublimity play an indispensable part; but pathos is mostly absent. Hence the most pathetic orators have usually but little skill in panegyric, and conversely those who are powerful in
4 panegyric generally fail in pathos. If, on the other hand, Caecilius supposed that pathos never contributes to sublimity, and this is why he thought it alien to the subject, he is entirely deceived. For I would confidently pronounce that nothing is so conducive to sublimity as an appropriate display of genuine passion, which bursts out with a kind of "fine

madness" and divine inspiration, and falls on our ears like the voice of a god.

IX

I have already said that of all these five conditions of the Sublime the most important is the first, that is, a certain lofty cast of mind. Therefore, although this is a faculty rather natural than acquired, nevertheless it will be well for us in this instance also to train up our souls to sublimity, and make them as it were ever big with noble thoughts.
How, it may be asked, is this to be done? I have 2
hinted elsewhere in my writings that sublimity is, so to say, the image of greatness of soul. Hence a thought in its naked simplicity, even though unuttered, is sometimes admirable by the sheer force of its sublimity; for instance, the silence of Ajax in the eleventh *Odyssey*[1] is great, and grander than
anything he could have said. It is absolutely 3
essential, then, first of all to settle the question whence this grandeur of conception arises; and the answer is that true eloquence can be found only in those whose spirit is generous and aspiring. For those whose whole lives are wasted in paltry and illiberal thoughts and habits cannot possibly produce any work worthy of the lasting reverence of mankind.

[1] *Od.* xi. 543.

It is only natural that their words should be full of
4 sublimity whose thoughts are full of majesty. Hence sublime thoughts belong properly to the loftiest minds. Such was the reply of Alexander to his general Parmenio, when the latter had observed, "Were I Alexander, I should have been satisfied"; "And I, were I Parmenio" . . .

The distance between heaven and earth[1]—a measure, one might say, not less appropriate to Homer's genius than to the stature of his discord.
5 How different is that touch of Hesiod's in his description of sorrow—if the *Shield* is really one of his works: "rheum from her nostrils flowed"[2]—an image not terrible, but disgusting. Now consider how Homer gives dignity to his divine persons—

> "As far as lies his airy ken, who sits
> On some tall crag, and scans the wine-dark sea:
> So far extends the heavenly coursers' stride."[3]

He measures their speed by the extent of the whole world—a grand comparison, which might reasonably lead us to remark that if the divine steeds were to take two such leaps in succession, they would find
6 no room in the world for another. Sublime also are the images in the "Battle of the Gods"—

> "A trumpet sound
> Rang through the air, and shook the Olympian height;
> Then terror seized the monarch of the dead,

[1] *Il.* iv. 442. [2] *Scut. Herc.* 267. [3] *Il.* v. 770.

And springing from his throne he cried aloud
With fearful voice, lest the earth, rent asunder
By Neptune's mighty arm, forthwith reveal
To mortal and immortal eyes those halls
So drear and dank, which e'en the gods abhor."[1]

Earth rent from its foundations! Tartarus itself laid bare! The whole world torn asunder and turned upside down! Why, my dear friend, this is a perfect hurly-burly, in which the whole universe, heaven and hell, mortals and immortals, share the conflict
and the peril. A terrible picture, certainly, but 7
(unless perhaps it is to be taken allegorically) downright impious, and overstepping the bounds of decency. It seems to me that the strange medley of wounds, quarrels, revenges, tears, bonds, and other woes which makes up the Homeric tradition of the gods was designed by its author to degrade his deities, as far as possible, into men, and exalt his men into deities—or rather, his gods are worse off than his human characters, since we, when we are unhappy, have a haven from ills in death, while the gods, according to him, not only live for ever, but
live for ever in misery. Far to be preferred to this 8
description of the Battle of the Gods are those passages which exhibit the divine nature in its true light, as something spotless, great, and pure, as, for instance, a passage which has often been handled by my predecessors, the lines on Poseidon:—

[1] *Il.* xxi. 388; xx. 61.

"Mountain and wood and solitary peak,
The ships Achaian, and the towers of Troy,
Trembled beneath the god's immortal feet.
Over the waves he rode, and round him played,
Lured from the deeps, the ocean's monstrous brood,
With uncouth gambols welcoming their lord:
The charmèd billows parted: on they flew."[1]

9 And thus also the lawgiver of the Jews, no ordinary man, having formed an adequate conception of the Supreme Being, gave it adequate expression in the opening words of his "Laws": "God said"—what?—"let there be light, and there was light: let there be land, and there was."

10 I trust you will not think me tedious if I quote yet one more passage from our great poet (referring this time to human characters) in illustration of the manner in which he leads us with him to heroic heights. A sudden and baffling darkness as of night has overspread the ranks of his warring Greeks. Then Ajax in sore perplexity cries aloud—

"Almighty Sire,
Only from darkness save Achaia's sons;
No more I ask, but give us back the day;
Grant but our sight, and slay us, if thou wilt."[2]

The feelings are just what we should look for in Ajax. He does not, you observe, ask for his life—such a request would have been unworthy of his heroic soul—but finding himself paralysed by dark-

[1] *Il.* xiii. 18; xx. 60; xiii. 19, 27. [2] *Il.* xvii. 645.

ness, and prohibited from employing his valour in any noble action, he chafes because his arms are idle, and prays for a speedy return of light. "At least," he thinks, "I shall find a warrior's grave, even though Zeus himself should fight against me."
In such passages the mind of the poet is swept along 11
in the whirlwind of the struggle, and, in his own words, he

> "Like the fierce war-god, raves, or wasting fire
> Through the deep thickets on a mountain-side ;
> His lips drop foam." [1]

But there is another and a very interesting 12
aspect of Homer's mind. When we turn to the *Odyssey* we find occasion to observe that a great poetical genius in the decline of power which comes with old age naturally leans towards the fabulous. For it is evident that this work was composed after the *Iliad*, in proof of which we may mention, among many other indications, the introduction in the *Odyssey* of the sequel to the story of his heroes' adventures at Troy, as so many additional episodes in the Trojan war, and especially the tribute of sorrow and mourning which is paid in that poem to departed heroes, as if in fulfilment of some previous design. The *Odyssey* is, in fact, a sort of epilogue to the *Iliad*—

[1] *Il.* xv. 605.

"There warrior Ajax lies, Achilles there,
And there Patroclus, godlike counsellor;
There lies my own dear son."[1]

13 And for the same reason, I imagine, whereas in the *Iliad*, which was written when his genius was in its prime, the whole structure of the poem is founded on action and struggle, in the *Odyssey* he generally prefers the narrative style, which is proper to old age. Hence Homer in his *Odyssey* may be compared to the setting sun: he is still as great as ever, but he has lost his fervent heat. The strain is now pitched to a lower key than in the "Tale of Troy divine": we begin to miss that high and equable sublimity which never flags or sinks, that continuous current of moving incidents, those rapid transitions, that force of eloquence, that opulence of imagery which is ever true to Nature. Like the sea when it retires upon itself and leaves its shores waste and bare, henceforth the tide of sublimity begins to ebb, and draws us away into the dim region of myth and
14 legend. In saying this I am not forgetting the fine storm-pieces in the *Odyssey*, the story of the Cyclops,[2] and other striking passages. It is Homer grown old I am discussing, but still it is Homer. Yet in every one of these passages the mythical predominates over the real.

My purpose in making this digression was, as I

[1] *Od.* iii. 109. [2] *Od.* ix. 182.

said, to point out into what trifles the second childhood of genius is too apt to be betrayed; such, I mean, as the bag in which the winds are confined,[1] the tale of Odysseus's comrades being changed by Circe into swine[2] ("whimpering porkers" Zoïlus called them), and how Zeus was fed like a nestling by the doves,[3] and how Odysseus passed ten nights on the shipwreck without food,[4] and the improbable incidents in the slaying of the suitors.[5] When Homer nods like this, we must be content to say that he dreams as Zeus might dream. Another reason for these remarks on the *Odyssey* is that I wished to make you understand that great poets and prose-writers, after they have lost their power of depicting the passions, turn naturally to the delineation of character. Such, for instance, is the lifelike and characteristic picture of the palace of Odysseus, which may be called a sort of comedy of manners.

X

Let us now consider whether there is anything further which conduces to the Sublime in writing. It is a law of Nature that in all things there are certain constituent parts, coexistent with their substance. It necessarily follows, therefore, that

[1] *Od.* x. 17. [2] *Od.* x. 237.
[3] *Od.* xii. 62. [4] *Od.* xii. 447. [5] *Od.* xxii. *passim.*

one cause of sublimity is the choice of the most striking circumstances involved in whatever we are describing, and, further, the power of afterwards combining them into one animate whole. The reader is attracted partly by the selection of the incidents, partly by the skill which has welded them together. For instance, Sappho, in dealing with the passionate manifestations attending on the frenzy of lovers, always chooses her strokes from the signs which she has observed to be actually exhibited in such cases. But her peculiar excellence lies in the felicity with which she chooses and unites together the most striking and powerful features.

2 "I deem that man divinely blest
Who sits, and, gazing on thy face,
Hears thee discourse with eloquent lips,
And marks thy lovely smile.
This, this it is that made my heart
So wildly flutter in my breast;
Whene'er I look on thee, my voice
Falters, and faints, and fails;
My tongue's benumbed; a subtle fire
Through all my body inly steals;
Mine eyes in darkness reel and swim;
Strange murmurs drown my ears;
With dewy damps my limbs are chilled;
An icy shiver shakes my frame;
Paler than ashes grows my cheek;
And Death seems nigh at hand."

3 Is it not wonderful how at the same moment

soul, body, ears, tongue, eyes, colour, all fail her, and
are lost to her as completely as if they were not her
own? Observe too how her sensations contradict
one another—she freezes, she burns, she raves, she
reasons, and all at the same instant. And this
description is designed to show that she is assailed,
not by any particular emotion, but by a tumult of
different emotions. All these tokens belong to the
passion of love; but it is in the choice, as I said, of
the most striking features, and in the combination of
them into one picture, that the perfection of this
Ode of Sappho's lies. Similarly Homer in his de-
scriptions of tempests always picks out the most
terrific circumstances. The poet of the "Arim- 4
aspeia" intended the following lines to be grand—

> "Herein I find a wonder passing strange,
> That men should make their dwelling on the deep,
> Who far from land essaying bold to range
> With anxious heart their toilsome vigils keep;
> Their eyes are fixed on heaven's starry steep;
> The ravening billows hunger for their lives;
> And oft each shivering wretch, constrained to weep,
> With suppliant hands to move heaven's pity strives,
> While many a direful qualm his very vitals rives."

All must see that there is more of ornament than
of terror in the description. Now let us turn to
Homer. One passage will suffice to show the 5
contrast.

"On them he leaped, as leaps a raging wave,
Child of the winds, under the darkening clouds,
On a swift ship, and buries her in foam;
Then cracks the sail beneath the roaring blast,
And quakes the breathless seamen's shuddering heart
In terror dire: death lours on every wave."[1]

6 Aratus has tried to give a new turn to this last thought—

"But one frail timber shields them from their doom,"[2]—

banishing by this feeble piece of subtlety all the terror from his description; setting limits, moreover, to the peril described by saying "shields them"; for so long as it shields them it matters not whether the "timber" be "frail" or stout. But Homer does not set any fixed limit to the danger, but gives us a vivid picture of men a thousand times on the brink of destruction, every wave threatening them with instant death. Moreover, by his bold and forcible combination of prepositions of opposite meaning he tortures his language to imitate the agony of the scene, the constraint which is put on the words accurately reflecting the anxiety of the sailors' minds, and the diction being stamped, as it were, with the
7 peculiar terror of the situation. Similarly Archilochus in his description of the shipwreck, and similarly Demosthenes when he describes how the news came of the taking of Elatea[3]—"It was even-

[1] *Il.* xv. 624.
[2] *Phaenomena*, 299.
[3] *De Cor.* 169.

ing," etc. Each of these authors fastidiously rejects whatever is not essential to the subject, and in putting together the most vivid features is careful to guard against the interposition of anything frivolous, unbecoming, or tiresome. Such blemishes mar the general effect, and give a patched and gaping appearance to the edifice of sublimity, which ought to be built up in a solid and uniform structure.

XI

Closely associated with the part of our subject we have just treated of is that excellence of writing which is called amplification, when a writer or pleader, whose theme admits of many successive starting-points and pauses, brings on one impressive point after another in a continuous and ascending scale. Now whether this is employed in the treat- 2
ment of a commonplace, or in the way of exaggeration, whether to place arguments or facts in a strong light, or in the disposition of actions, or of passions—for amplification takes a hundred different shapes—in all cases the orator must be cautioned that none of these methods is complete without the aid of sublimity,—unless, indeed, it be our object to excite pity, or to depreciate an opponent's argument. In all other uses of amplification, if you subtract the element of sublimity you will take as it were the

soul from the body. No sooner is the support of sublimity removed than the whole becomes lifeless, nerveless, and dull.

3 There is a difference, however, between the rules I am now giving and those just mentioned. Then I was speaking of the delineation and co-ordination of the principal circumstances. My next task, therefore, must be briefly to define this difference, and with it the general distinction between amplification and sublimity. Our whole discourse will thus gain in clearness.

XII

I must first remark that I am not satisfied with the definition of amplification generally given by authorities on rhetoric. They explain it to be a form of language which invests the subject with a certain grandeur. Yes, but this definition may be applied indifferently to sublimity, pathos, and the use of figurative language, since all these invest the discourse with some sort of grandeur. The difference seems to me to lie in this, that sublimity gives elevation to a subject, while amplification gives extension as well. Thus the sublime is often conveyed in a single thought,[1] but amplification can only subsist with a certain prolixity and diffusiveness.
2 The most general definition of amplification would

[1] Comp. i. 4. 26.

explain it to consist in the gathering together of all the constituent parts and topics of a subject, emphasising the argument by repeated insistence, herein differing from proof, that whereas the object of proof is logical demonstration, . . .

Plato, like the sea, pours forth his riches in a copious and expansive flood. Hence the style of the orator, 3
who is the greater master of our emotions, is often, as it were, red-hot and ablaze with passion, whereas Plato, whose strength lay in a sort of weighty and sober magnificence, though never frigid, does not rival the thunders of Demosthenes. And, if a Greek may 4
be allowed to express an opinion on the subject of Latin literature, I think the same difference may be discerned in the grandeur of Cicero as compared with that of his Grecian rival. The sublimity of Demosthenes is generally sudden and abrupt: that of Cicero is equally diffused. Demosthenes is vehement, rapid, vigorous, terrible; he burns and sweeps away all before him; and hence we may liken him to a whirlwind or a thunderbolt: Cicero is like a widespread conflagration, which rolls over and feeds on all around it, whose fire is extensive and burns long, breaking out successively in different places, and finding its fuel now here, now there. Such points, however, I resign to your more com- 5
petent judgment.

To resume, then, the high-strung sublimity of

Demosthenes is appropriate to all cases where it is desired to exaggerate, or to rouse some vehement emotion, and generally when we want to carry away our audience with us. We must employ the diffusive style, on the other hand, when we wish to overpower them with a flood of language. It is suitable, for example, to familiar topics, and to perorations in most cases, and to digressions, and to all descriptive and declamatory passages, and in dealing with history or natural science, and in numerous other cases.

XIII

To return, however, to Plato: how grand he can be with all that gentle and noiseless flow of eloquence you will be reminded by this characteristic passage, which you have read in his *Republic*: "They, therefore, who have no knowledge of wisdom and virtue, whose lives are passed in feasting and similar joys, are borne downwards, as is but natural, and in this region they wander all their lives; but they never lifted up their eyes nor were borne upwards to the true world above, nor ever tasted of pleasure abiding and unalloyed; but like beasts they ever look downwards, and their heads are bent to the ground, or rather to the table; they feed full their bellies and their lusts, and longing ever more and more for such things they kick and gore one another

with horns and hoofs of iron, and slay one another in their insatiable desires."[1]

2 We may learn from this author, if we would but observe his example, that there is yet another path besides those mentioned which leads to sublime heights. What path do I mean? The emulous imitation of the great poets and prose-writers of the past. On this mark, dear friend, let us keep our eyes ever steadfastly fixed. Many gather the divine impulse from another's spirit, just as we are told that the Pythian priestess, when she takes her seat on the tripod, where there is said to be a rent in the ground breathing upwards a heavenly emanation, straightway conceives from that source the godlike gift of prophecy, and utters her inspired oracles; so likewise from the mighty genius of the great writers of antiquity there is carried into the souls of their rivals, as from a fount of inspiration, an effluence which breathes upon them until, even though their natural temper be but cold, they share the sublime enthusiasm of others. Thus Homer's name is asso- 3
ciated with a numerous band of illustrious disciples—not only Herodotus, but Stesichorus before him, and the great Archilochus, and above all Plato, who from the great fountain-head of Homer's genius drew into himself innumerable tributary streams. Perhaps it would have been necessary to illustrate

[1] *Rep.* ix. 586, A.

this point, had not Ammonius and his school already classified and noted down the various
4 examples. Now what I am speaking of is not plagiarism, but resembles the process of copying from fair forms or statues or works of skilled labour. Nor in my opinion would so many fair flowers of imagery have bloomed among the philosophical dogmas of Plato, nor would he have risen so often to the language and topics of poetry, had he not engaged heart and soul in a contest for precedence with Homer, like a young champion entering the lists against a veteran. It may be that he showed too ambitious a spirit in venturing on such a duel; but nevertheless it was not without advantage to him: "for strife like this," as Hesiod says, "is good for men."[1] And where shall we find a more glorious arena or a nobler crown than here, where even defeat at the hands of our predecessors is not ignoble?

XIV

Therefore it is good for us also, when we are labouring on some subject which demands a lofty and majestic style, to imagine to ourselves how Homer might have expressed this or that, or how Plato or Demosthenes would have clothed it with

[1] *Opp.* 29.

sublimity, or, in history, Thucydides. For by our
fixing an eye of rivalry on those high examples
they will become like beacons to guide us, and will
perhaps lift up our souls to the fulness of the
stature we conceive. And it would be still better 2
should we try to realise this further thought, How
would Homer, had he been here, or how would
Demosthenes, have listened to what I have written,
or how would they have been affected by it? For
what higher incentive to exertion could a writer
have than to imagine such judges or such an
audience of his works, and to give an account of his
writings with heroes like these to criticise and look
on? Yet more inspiring would be the thought, 3
With what feelings will future ages through all time
read these my works? If this should awaken a
fear in any writer that he will not be intelligible to
his contemporaries it will necessarily follow that
the conceptions of his mind will be crude, maimed,
and abortive, and lacking that ripe perfection which
alone can win the applause of ages to come.

XV

The dignity, grandeur, and energy of a style largely depend on a proper employment of images, a term which I prefer to that usually given.[1] The

[1] εἰδωλοποιΐαι, "fictions of the imagination," Hickie.

term image in its most general acceptation includes every thought, howsoever presented, which issues in speech. But the term is now generally confined to those cases when he who is speaking, by reason of the rapt and excited state of his feelings, imagines himself to see what he is talking about, and pro-
2 duces a similar illusion in his hearers. Poets and orators both employ images, but with a very different object, as you are well aware. The poetical image is designed to astound; the oratorical image to give perspicuity. Both, however, seek to work on the emotions.

> "Mother, I pray thee, set not thou upon me
> Those maids with bloody face and serpent hair:
> See, see, they come, they're here, they spring upon me!"[1]

And again—

> "Ah, ah, she'll slay me! whither shall I fly?"[2]

The poet when he wrote like this saw the Erinyes with his own eyes, and he almost compels his readers
3 to see them too. Euripides found his chief delight in the labour of giving tragic expression to these two passions of madness and love, showing here a real mastery which I cannot think he exhibited elsewhere. Still, he is by no means diffident in venturing on other fields of the imagination. His genius was far from being of the highest order, but

[1] Eur. *Orest.* 255. [2] *Iph. Taur.* 291.

by taking pains he often raises himself to a tragic elevation. In his sublimer moments he generally reminds us of Homer's description of the lion—

> "With tail he lashes both his flanks and sides,
> And spurs himself to battle."[1]

Take, for instance, that passage in which Helios, in handing the reins to his son, says— 4

> "Drive on, but shun the burning Libyan tract;
> The hot dry air will let thine axle down:
> Toward the seven Pleiades keep thy steadfast way."

And then—

> "This said, his son undaunted snatched the reins,
> Then smote the winged coursers' sides: they bound
> Forth on the void and cavernous vault of air.
> His father mounts another steed, and rides
> With warning voice guiding his son. 'Drive there!
> Turn, turn thy car this way.'"[2]

May we not say that the spirit of the poet mounts the chariot with his hero, and accompanies the winged steeds in their perilous flight? Were it not so,—had not his imagination soared side by side with them in that celestial passage,—he would never have conceived so vivid an image. Similar is that passage in his "Cassandra," beginning

> "Ye Trojans, lovers of the steed."[3]

Aeschylus is especially bold in forming images 5

[1] *Il.* xx. 170. [2] Eur. *Phaet.*
[3] Perhaps from the lost "Alexander" (Jahn).

suited to his heroic themes: as when he says of his "Seven against Thebes"—

> "Seven mighty men, and valiant captains, slew
> Over an iron-bound shield a bull, then dipped
> Their fingers in the blood, and all invoked
> Ares, Enyo, and death-dealing Flight
> In witness of their oaths,"[1]

and describes how they all mutually pledged themselves without flinching to die. Sometimes, however, his thoughts are unshapen, and as it were rough-hewn and rugged. Not observing this, Euripides, from too blind a rivalry, sometimes falls under the
6 same censure. Aeschylus with a strange violence of language represents the palace of Lycurgus as *possessed* at the appearance of Dionysus—

> "The halls with rapture thrill, the roof's inspired."[2]

Here Euripides, in borrowing the image, softens its extravagance[3]—

> "And all the mountain felt the god."[4]

7 Sophocles has also shown himself a great master of the imagination in the scene in which the dying Oedipus prepares himself for burial in the midst of a tempest,[5] and where he tells how Achilles appeared to the Greeks over his tomb just as they were

[1] *Sept. c. Th.* 42.
[2] Aesch. *Lycurg.*
[3] Lit. "Giving it a different flavour," as Arist. *Poet.* ἡδυσμένῳ λόγῳ χώρις ἑκάστῳ τῶν εἰδῶν, ii. 10.
[4] *Bacch.* 726.
[5] *Oed. Col.* 1586.

putting out to sea on their departure from Troy.[1] This last scene has also been delineated by Simonides with a vividness which leaves him inferior to none. But it would be an endless task to cite all possible examples.

To return, then,[2] in poetry, as I observed, a 8
certain mythical exaggeration is allowable, transcending altogether mere logical credence. But the chief beauties of an oratorical image are its energy and reality. Such digressions become offensive and monstrous when the language is cast in a poetical and fabulous mould, and runs into all sorts of impossibilities. Thus much may be learnt from the great orators of our own day, when they tell us in tragic tones that they see the Furies[3]—good people, can't they understand that when Orestes cries out

> "Off, off, I say! I know thee who thou art,
> One of the fiends that haunt me: I feel thine arms
> About me cast, to drag me down to hell,"[4]

these are the hallucinations of a madman?

Wherein, then, lies the force of an oratorical 9
image? Doubtless in adding energy and passion in a hundred different ways to a speech; but especially in this, that when it is mingled with the practical, argumentative parts of an oration, it does not merely

[1] In his lost "Polyxena."

[2] § 2.

[3] Comp. Petronius, *Satyricon*, ch. i. *passim*.

[4] *Orest.* 264.

convince the hearer, but enthralls him. Such is the
effect of those words of Demosthenes:[1] "Supposing,
now, at this moment a cry of alarm were heard out-
side the assize courts, and the news came that the
prison was broken open and the prisoners escaped,
is there any man here who is such a trifler that he
would not run to the rescue at the top of his speed?
But suppose some one came forward with the in-
formation that they had been set at liberty by the
defendant, what then? Why, he would be lynched
10 on the spot!" Compare also the way in which
Hyperides excused himself, when he was proceeded
against for bringing in a bill to liberate the slaves
after Chaeronea. "This measure," he said, "was
not drawn up by any orator, but by the battle of
Chaeronea." This striking image, being thrown in
by the speaker in the midst of his proofs, enables
him by one bold stroke to carry all mere logical
11 objection before him. In all such cases our nature
is drawn towards that which affects it most power-
fully: hence an image lures us away from an
argument: judgment is paralysed, matters of fact
disappear from view, eclipsed by the superior blaze.
Nor is it surprising that we should be thus affected;
for when two forces are thus placed in juxtaposition,
the stronger must always absorb into itself the
weaker.

[1] *c. Timocrat.* 208.

On sublimity of thought, and the manner in 12
which it arises from native greatness of mind, from imitation, and from the employment of images, this brief outline must suffice.[1]

XVI

The subject which next claims our attention is that of figures of speech. I have already observed that figures, judiciously employed, play an important part in producing sublimity. It would be a tedious, or rather an endless task, to deal with every detail of this subject here; so in order to establish what I have laid down, I will just run over, without further preface, a few of those figures which are most effective in lending grandeur to language.

Demosthenes is defending his policy; his natural 2
line of argument would have been: "You did not do wrong, men of Athens, to take upon yourselves the struggle for the liberties of Hellas. Of this you have home proofs. *They* did not wrong who fought at Marathon, at Salamis, and Plataea." Instead of this, in a sudden moment of supreme exaltation he bursts out like some inspired prophet with that famous appeal to the mighty dead: "Ye did not, could not have done wrong. I swear it by the

[1] He passes over chs. x. xi.

men who faced the foe at Marathon!"[1] He employs the figure of adjuration, to which I will here give the name of Apostrophe. And what does he gain by it? He exalts the Athenian ancestors to the rank of divinities, showing that we ought to invoke those who have fallen for their country as gods; he fills the hearts of his judges with the heroic pride of the old warriors of Hellas; forsaking the beaten path of argument he rises to the loftiest altitude of grandeur and passion, and commands assent by the startling novelty of his appeal; he applies the healing charm of eloquence, and thus "ministers to the mind diseased" of his countrymen, until lifted by his brave words above their misfortunes they begin to feel that the disaster of Chaeronea is no less glorious than the victories of Marathon and Salamis. All this he effects by the use of one figure, and so
3 carries his hearers away with him. It is said that the germ of this adjuration is found in Eupolis—

"By mine own fight, by Marathon, I say,
Who makes my heart to ache shall rue the day!"[2]

But there is nothing grand in the mere employment of an oath. Its grandeur will depend on its being employed in the right place and the right manner, on the right occasion, and with the right motive. In Eupolis the oath is nothing beyond an oath; and

[1] *De Cor.* 208.
[2] In his (lost) "Demis."

the Athenians to whom it is addressed are still prosperous, and in need of no consolation. Moreover, the poet does not, like Demosthenes, swear by the departed heroes as deities, so as to engender in his audience a just conception of their valour, but diverges from the champions to the battle—a mere lifeless thing. But Demosthenes has so skilfully managed the oath that in addressing his countrymen after the defeat of Chaeronea he takes out of their minds all sense of disaster; and at the same time, while proving that no mistake has been made, he holds up an example, confirms his arguments by an oath, and makes his praise of the dead an incentive to the living. And to rebut a possible objection 4
which occurred to him—"Can you, Demosthenes, whose policy ended in defeat, swear by a victory?"—the orator proceeds to measure his language, choosing his very words so as to give no handle to opponents, thus showing us that even in our most inspired moments reason ought to hold the reins.[1] Let us mark his words: "Those who *faced the foe* at Marathon; those who *fought in the sea-fights* of Salamis and Artemisium; those who *stood in the ranks* at Plataea." Note that he nowhere says "those who *conquered*," artfully suppressing any word which might hint at the successful issue of those

[1] Lit. "That even in the midst of the revels of Bacchus we ought to remain sober."

battles, which would have spoilt the parallel with Chaeronea. And for the same reason he steals a march on his audience, adding immediately: "All of whom, Aeschines,—not those who were successful only,—were buried by the state at the public expense."

XVII

There is one truth which my studies have led me to observe, which perhaps it would be worth while to set down briefly here. It is this, that by a natural law the Sublime, besides receiving an acquisition of strength from figures, in its turn lends support in a remarkable manner to them. To explain: the use of figures has a peculiar tendency to rouse a suspicion of dishonesty, and to create an impression of treachery, scheming, and false reasoning; especially if the person addressed be a judge, who is master of the situation, and still more in the case of a despot, a king, a military potentate, or any of those who sit in high places.[1] If a man feels that this artful speaker is treating him like a silly boy and trying to throw dust in his eyes, he at once grows irritated, and thinking that such false reasoning implies a contempt of his understanding, he perhaps flies into a rage and will not hear another

[1] Reading with Cobet, καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν ὑπεροχαῖς.

word; or even if he masters his resentment, still he is utterly indisposed to yield to the persuasive power of eloquence. Hence it follows that a figure is then most effectual when it appears in disguise. To 2
allay, then, this distrust which attaches to the use of figures we must call in the powerful aid of sublimity and passion. For art, once associated with these great allies, will be overshadowed by their grandeur and beauty, and pass beyond the reach of all suspicion. To prove this I need only refer to the passage already quoted: "I swear it by the men," etc. It is the very brilliancy of the orator's figure which blinds us to the fact that it *is* a figure. For as the fainter lustre of the stars is put out of sight by the all-encompassing rays of the sun, so when sublimity sheds its light all round the sophistries of rhetoric they become invisible. A similar illusion 3
is produced by the painter's art. When light and shadow are represented in colour, though they lie on the same surface side by side, it is the light which meets the eye first, and appears not only more conspicuous but also much nearer. In the same manner passion and grandeur of language, lying nearer to our souls by reason both of a certain natural affinity and of their radiance, always strike our mental eye before we become conscious of the figure, throwing its artificial character into the shade and hiding it as it were in a veil.

XVIII

The figures of question and interrogation[1] also possess a specific quality which tends strongly to stir an audience and give energy to the speaker's words. "Or tell me, do you want to run about asking one another, is there any news? what greater news could you have than that a man of Macedon is making himself master of Hellas? Is Philip dead? Not he. However, he is ill. But what is that to you? Even if anything happens to him you will soon raise up another Philip."[2] Or this passage: "Shall we sail against Macedon? And where, asks one, shall we effect a landing? The war itself will show us where Philip's weak places lie."[2] Now if this had been put baldly it would have lost greatly in force. As we see it, it is full of the quick alternation of question and answer. The orator replies to himself as though he were meeting another man's objections. And this figure not only raises the tone of his words but makes them
2 more convincing. For an exhibition of feeling has then most effect on an audience when it appears to flow naturally from the occasion, not to have been laboured by the art of the speaker; and this device of questioning and replying to himself reproduces

[1] See Note. [2] *Phil.* i. 44.

the moment of passion. For as a sudden question addressed to an individual will sometimes startle him into a reply which is an unguarded expression of his genuine sentiments, so the figure of question and interrogation blinds the judgment of an audience, and deceives them into a belief that what is really the result of labour in every detail has been struck out of the speaker by the inspiration of the moment.

There is one passage in Herodotus which is generally credited with extraordinary sublimity. . . .

XIX

. . . The removal of connecting particles gives a quick rush and "torrent rapture" to a passage, the writer appearing to be actually almost left behind by his own words. There is an example in Xenophon: "Clashing their shields together they pushed, they fought, they slew, they fell."[1] And the words of Eurylochus in the *Odyssey*—

> "We passed at thy command the woodland's shade;
> We found a stately hall built in a mountain glade."[2]

Words thus severed from one another without the intervention of stops give a lively impression of one who through distress of mind at once halts and

[1] Xen. *Hel.* iv. 3. 19. [2] *Od.* x. 251.

hurries in his speech. And this is what Homer has expressed by using the figure *Asyndeton.*

XX

But nothing is so conducive to energy as a combination of different figures, when two or three uniting their resources mutually contribute to the vigour, the cogency, and the beauty of a speech. So Demosthenes in his speech against Meidias repeats the same words and breaks up his sentences in one lively descriptive passage: "He who receives a blow is hurt in many ways which he could not even describe to another, by gesture, by look, by tone."
2 Then, to vary the movement of his speech, and prevent it from standing still (for stillness produces rest, but passion requires a certain disorder of language, imitating the agitation and commotion of the soul), he at once dashes off in another direction, breaking up his words again, and repeating them in a different form, "by gesture, by look, by tone—when insult, when hatred, is added to violence, when he is struck with the fist, when he is struck as a slave!" By such means the orator imitates the action of Meidias, dealing blow upon blow on the minds of his judges. Immediately after like a hurricane he makes a fresh attack: "When he is struck with the fist, when he is struck in the face; this is what moves, this is what

maddens a man, unless he is inured to outrage; no one could describe all this so as to bring home to his hearers its bitterness."[1] You see how he preserves, by continual variation, the intrinsic force of these repetitions and broken clauses, so that his order seems irregular, and conversely his irregularity acquires a certain measure of order.

XXI.

Supposing we add the conjunctions, after the practice of Isocrates and his school: "Moreover, I must not omit to mention that he who strikes a blow may hurt in many ways, in the first place by gesture, in the second place by look, in the third and last place by his tone." If you compare the words thus set down in logical sequence with the expressions of the "Meidias," you will see that the rapidity and rugged abruptness of passion, when all is made regular by connecting links, will be smoothed away, and the whole point and fire of the passage will at
once disappear. For as, if you were to bind two 2
runners together, they will forthwith be deprived of all liberty of movement, even so passion rebels against the trammels of conjunctions and other particles, because they curb its free rush and destroy the impression of mechanical impulse.

[1] *Meid.* 72.

XXII

The figure hyperbaton belongs to the same class. By hyperbaton we mean a transposition of words or thoughts from their usual order, bearing unmistakably the characteristic stamp of violent mental agitation. In real life we often see a man under the influence of rage, or fear, or indignation, or beside himself with jealousy, or with some other out of the interminable list of human passions, begin a sentence, and then swerve aside into some inconsequent parenthesis, and then again double back to his original statement, being borne with quick turns by his distress, as though by a shifting wind, now this way, now that, and playing a thousand capricious variations on his words, his thoughts, and the natural order of his discourse. Now the figure hyperbaton is the means which is employed by the best writers to imitate these signs of natural emotion. For art is then perfect when it seems to be nature, and nature, again, is most effective when pervaded by the unseen presence of art. An illustration will be found in the speech of Dionysius of Phocaea in Herodotus: "A hair's breadth now decides our destiny, Ionians, whether we shall live as freemen or as slaves—ay, as runaway slaves. Now, therefore, if you choose to endure a little hardship, you will be

able at the cost of some present exertion to overcome your enemies."[1] The regular sequence here would 2
have been: "Ionians, now is the time for you to endure a little hardship; for a hair's breadth will now decide our destiny." But the Phocaean transposes the title "Ionians," rushing at once to the subject of alarm, as though in the terror of the moment he had forgotten the usual address to his audience. Moreover, he inverts the logical order of his thoughts, and instead of beginning with the necessity for exertion, which is the point he wishes to urge upon them, he first gives them the reason for that necessity in the words, "a hair's breadth now decides our destiny," so that his words seem unpremeditated, and forced upon him by the crisis.

Thucydides surpasses all other writers in the 3
bold use of this figure, even breaking up sentences which are by their nature absolutely one and indivisible. But nowhere do we find it so unsparingly employed as in Demosthenes, who though not so daring in his manner of using it as the elder writer is very happy in giving to his speeches by frequent transpositions the lively air of unstudied debate. Moreover, he drags, as it were, his audience with him into the perils of a long inverted clause. He 4
often begins to say something, then leaves the thought in suspense, meanwhile thrusting in between,

[1] vi. 11.

in a position apparently foreign and unnatural, some extraneous matters, one upon another, and having thus made his hearers fear lest the whole discourse should break down, and forced them into eager sympathy with the danger of the speaker, when he is nearly at the end of a period he adds just at the right moment, *i.e.* when it is least expected, the point which they have been waiting for so long. And thus by the very boldness and hazard of his inversions he produces a much more astounding effect. I forbear to cite examples, as they are too numerous to require it.

XXIII

The juxtaposition of different cases, the enumeration of particulars, and the use of contrast and climax, all, as you know, add much vigour, and give beauty and great elevation and life to a style. The diction also gains greatly in diversity and movement by changes of case, time, person, number, and gender.

2 With regard to change of number: not only is the style improved by the use of those words which, though singular in form, are found on inspection to be plural in meaning, as in the lines—

> "A countless host dispersed along the sand
> With joyous cries the shoal of tunny hailed,"

but it is more worthy of observation that plurals

for singulars sometimes fall with a more impressive dignity, rousing the imagination by the mere sense of vast number. Such is the effect of those words 3
of Oedipus in Sophocles—

> "Oh fatal, fatal ties!
> Ye gave us birth, and we being born ye sowed
> The self-same seed, and gave the world to view
> Sons, brothers, sires, domestic murder foul,
> Brides, mothers, wives. . . . Ay, ye laid bare
> The blackest, deepest place where Shame can dwell."[1]

Here we have in either case but one person, first Oedipus, then Jocasta; but the expansion of number into the plural gives an impression of multiplied calamity. So in the following plurals—

> "There came forth Hectors, and there came Sarpedons."

And in those words of Plato's (which we have already adduced elsewhere), referring to the 4
Athenians: "We have no Pelopses or Cadmuses or Aegyptuses or Danauses, or any others out of all the mob of Hellenised barbarians, dwelling among us; no, this is the land of pure Greeks, with no mixture of foreign elements,"[2] etc. Such an accumulation of words in the plural number necessarily gives greater pomp and sound to a subject. But we must only have recourse to this device when the nature of our theme makes it allowable to amplify, to multiply, or to speak in the tones of exaggeration or

[1] *O. R.* 1403. [2] *Menex.* 245, D.

passion. To overlay every sentence with ornament[1] is very pedantic.

XXIV

On the other hand, the contraction of plurals into singulars sometimes creates an appearance of great dignity; as in that phrase of Demosthenes: "Thereupon all Peloponnesus was divided."[2] There is another in Herodotus: "When Phrynichus brought a drama on the stage entitled *The Taking of Miletus*, the whole theatre fell a weeping"—instead of "all the spectators." This knitting together of a number of scattered particulars into one whole gives them an aspect of corporate life. And the beauty of both uses lies, I think, in their betokening emotion, by giving a sudden change of complexion to the circumstances,—whether a word which is strictly singular is unexpectedly changed into a plural,—or whether a number of isolated units are combined by the use of a single sonorous word under one head.

XXV

When past events are introduced as happening in present time the narrative form is changed into

[1] Lit. "To hang bells everywhere," a metaphor from the bells which were attached to horses' trappings on festive occasions.

[2] *De Cor.* 18.

a dramatic action. Such is that description in Xenophon: "A man who has fallen and is being trampled under foot by Cyrus's horse, strikes the belly of the animal with his scimitar; the horse starts aside and unseats Cyrus, and he falls." Similarly in many passages of Thucydides.

XXVI

Equally dramatic is the interchange of persons, often making a reader fancy himself to be moving in the midst of the perils described—

> "Unwearied, thou wouldst deem, with toil unspent,
> They met in war; so furiously they fought."[1]

and that line in Aratus—

> "Beware that month to tempt the surging sea."[2]

In the same way Herodotus: "Passing from the city of Elephantine you will sail upwards until you reach a level plain. You cross this region, and there entering another ship you will sail on for two days, and so reach a great city, whose name is Meroe."[3] Observe how he takes us, as it were, by the hand, and leads us in spirit through these places, making us no longer readers, but spectators. Such a direct personal address always has the effect of placing the reader in the midst of the scene of 2

[1] *Il.* xv. 697. [2] *Phaen.* 287. [3] ii. 29.

3 action. And by pointing your words to the individual reader, instead of to the readers generally, as in the line

> "Thou had'st not known for whom Tydides fought,"[1]

and thus exciting him by an appeal to himself, you will rouse interest, and fix attention, and make him a partaker in the action of the book.

XXVII

Sometimes, again, a writer in the midst of a narrative in the third person suddenly steps aside and makes a transition to the first. It is a kind of figure which strikes like a sudden outburst of passion. Thus Hector in the *Iliad*

> "With mighty voice called to the men of Troy
> To storm the ships, and leave the bloody spoils:
> If any I behold with willing foot
> Shunning the ships, and lingering on the plain,
> That hour I will contrive his death."[2]

The poet then takes upon himself the narrative part, as being his proper business; but this abrupt threat he attributes, without a word of warning, to the enraged Trojan chief. To have interposed any such words as "Hector said so and so" would have had a frigid effect. As the lines stand the writer is left behind by his own words, and the transition is

[1] *Il.* v. 85. [2] *Il.* xv. 346.

effected while he is preparing for it. Accordingly 2
the proper use of this figure is in dealing with some urgent crisis which will not allow the writer to linger, but compels him to make a rapid change from one person to another. So in Hecataeus: "Now Ceyx took this in dudgeon, and straightway bade the children of Heracles to depart. 'Behold, I can give you no help; lest, therefore, ye perish yourselves and bring hurt upon me also, get ye forth into some other land.'" There is a different 3
use of the change of persons in the speech of Demosthenes against Aristogeiton, which places before us the quick turns of violent emotion. "Is there none to be found among you," he asks, "who even feels indignation at the outrageous conduct of a loathsome and shameless wretch who,—vilest of men, when you were debarred from freedom of speech, not by barriers or by doors, which might indeed be opened,"[1] etc. Thus in the midst of a half-expressed thought he makes a quick change of front, and having almost in his anger torn one word into two persons, "who, vilest of men," etc., he then breaks off his address to Aristogeiton, and seems to leave him, nevertheless, by the passion of his utterance, rousing all the more the attention of the court. The same feature may be observed in a 4
speech of Penelope's—

[1] c. *Aristog.* i. 27.

"Why com'st thou, Medon, from the wooers proud?
Com'st thou to bid the handmaids of my lord
To cease their tasks, and make for them good cheer?
Ill fare their wooing, and their gathering here!
Would God that here this hour they all might take
Their last, their latest meal! Who day by day
Make here your muster, to devour and waste
The substance of my son: have ye not heard
When children at your fathers' knee the deeds
And prowess of your king?"[1]

XXVIII

None, I suppose, would dispute the fact that periphrasis tends much to sublimity. For, as in music the simple air is rendered more pleasing by the addition of harmony, so in language periphrasis often sounds in concord with a literal expression, adding much to the beauty of its tone,—provided always that it is not inflated and harsh, but agree-
2 ably blended. To confirm this one passage from Plato will suffice—the opening words of his Funeral Oration: "In deed these men have now received from us their due, and that tribute paid they are now passing on their destined journey, with the State speeding them all and his own friends speeding each one of them on his way."[2] Death, you see, he calls the "destined journey"; to receive the

[1] *Od.* iv. 681. [2] *Menex.* 236, D.

rites of burial is to be publicly "sped on your way" by the State. And these turns of language lend dignity in no common measure to the thought. He takes the words in their naked simplicity and handles them as a musician, investing them with melody,—harmonising them, as it were,—by the use of periphrasis. So Xenophon: "Labour you regard as the 3
guide to a pleasant life, and you have laid up in your souls the fairest and most soldier-like of all gifts: in praise is your delight, more than in anything else."[1] By saying, instead of "you are ready to labour," "you regard labour as the guide to a pleasant life," and by similarly expanding the rest of that passage, he gives to his eulogy a much wider and loftier range of sentiment. Let us add that inimitable phrase in Herodotus: "Those Scythians who pillaged the temple were smitten from heaven by a female malady."

XXIX

But this figure, more than any other, is very liable to abuse, and great restraint is required in employing it. It soon begins to carry an impression of feebleness, savours of vapid trifling, and arouses disgust. Hence Plato, who is very bold and not always happy in his use of figures, is much ridiculed

[1] *Cyrop.* i. 5. 12.

for saying in his *Laws* that "neither gold nor silver wealth must be allowed to establish itself in our State,"[1] suggesting, it is said, that if he had forbidden property in oxen or sheep he would certainly have spoken of it as "bovine and ovine wealth."

2 Here we must quit this part of our subject, hoping, my dear friend Terentian, that your learned curiosity will be satisfied with this short excursion on the use of figures in their relation to the Sublime. All those which I have mentioned help to render a style more energetic and impassioned; and passion contributes as largely to sublimity as the delineation of character to amusement.

XXX

But since the thoughts conveyed by words and the expression of those thoughts are for the most part interwoven with one another, we will now add some considerations which have hitherto been overlooked on the subject of expression. To say that the choice of appropriate and striking words has a marvellous power and an enthralling charm for the reader, that this is the main object of pursuit with all orators and writers, that it is this, and this alone, which causes the works of literature to exhibit the glowing perfections of the finest statues, their grand-

[1] *De Legg.* vii. 801, B.

eur, their beauty, their mellowness, their dignity, their energy, their power, and all their other graces, and that it is this which endows the facts with a vocal soul; to say all this would, I fear, be, to the initiated, an impertinence. Indeed, we may say with strict truth that beautiful words are the very light of thought. I do not mean to say that im- 2
posing language is appropriate to every occasion. A trifling subject tricked out in grand and stately words would have the same effect as a huge tragic mask placed on the head of a little child. Only in poetry and . . .

XXXI

. . . There is a genuine ring in that line of Anacreon's—

> "The Thracian filly I no longer heed."

The same merit belongs to that original phrase in Theophrastus; to me, at least, from the closeness of its analogy, it seems to have a peculiar expressiveness, though Caecilius censures it, without telling us why. "Philip," says the historian, "showed a marvellous alacrity in *taking doses of trouble.*"[1] We see from this that the most homely language is sometimes far more vivid than the most ornamental, being recognised at once as the language of common life, and gaining immediate currency by its famili-

[1] See Note.

arity. In speaking, then, of Philip as "taking doses of trouble," Theopompus has laid hold on a phrase which describes with peculiar vividness one who for the sake of advantage endured what was base and
2 sordid with patience and cheerfulness. The same may be observed of two passages in Herodotus: "Cleomenes having lost his wits, cut his own flesh into pieces with a short sword, until by gradually *mincing* his whole body he destroyed himself";[1] and "Pythes continued fighting on his ship until he was entirely *hacked to pieces*."[2] Such terms come home at once to the vulgar reader, but their own vulgarity is redeemed by their expressiveness.

XXXII

Concerning the number of metaphors to be employed together Caecilius seems to give his vote with those critics who make a law that not more than two, or at the utmost three, should be combined in the same place. The use, however, must be determined by the occasion. Those outbursts of passion which drive onwards like a winter torrent draw with them as an indispensable accessory whole masses of metaphor. It is thus in that passage of Demosthenes
2 (who here also is our safest guide):[3] "Those vile fawning wretches, each one of whom has lopped from

[1] vi. 75. [2] vii. 181. [3] See Note.

his country her fairest members, who have toasted
away their liberty, first to Philip, now to Alexander,
who measure happiness by their belly and their vilest
appetites, who have overthrown the old landmarks
and standards of felicity among Greeks,—to be free-
men, and to have no one for a master."[1] Here the
number of the metaphors is obscured by the orator's
indignation against the betrayers of his country.
And to effect this Aristotle and Theophrastus re- 3
commend the softening of harsh metaphors by the
use of some such phrase as "So to say," "As it were,"
"If I may be permitted the expression," "If so bold
a term is allowable." For thus to forestall criticism[2]
mitigates, they assert, the boldness of the metaphors.
And I will not deny that these have their use. 4
Nevertheless I must repeat the remark which I made
in the case of figures,[3] and maintain that there are
native antidotes to the number and boldness of
metaphors, in well-timed displays of strong feeling,
and in unaffected sublimity, because these have an
innate power by the dash of their movement of
sweeping along and carrying all else before them.
Or should we not rather say that they absolutely
demand as indispensable the use of daring metaphors,
and will not allow the hearer to pause and criticise
the number of them, because he shares the passion
of the speaker?

[1] *De Cor.* 296. [2] Reading ὑποτίμησις. [3] Ch. xvii.

5 In the treatment, again, of familiar topics and in descriptive passages nothing gives such distinctness as a close and continuous series of metaphors. It is by this means that Xenophon has so finely delineated the anatomy of the human frame.[1] And there is a still more brilliant and life-like picture in Plato.[2] The human head he calls a *citadel*; the neck is an *isthmus* set to divide it from the chest; to support it beneath are the vertebrae, turning like *hinges*; pleasure he describes as a *bait* to tempt men to ill; the tongue is the *arbiter of tastes.* The heart is at once the *knot* of the veins and the *source* of the rapidly circulating blood, and is stationed in the *guard-room* of the body. The ramifying blood-vessels he calls *alleys.* "And casting about," he says, "for something to sustain the violent palpitation of the heart when it is alarmed by the approach of danger or agitated by passion, since at such times it is overheated, they (the gods) implanted in us the lungs, which are so fashioned that being soft and bloodless, and having cavities within, they act like a buffer, and when the heart boils with inward passion by yielding to its throbbing save it from injury." He compares the seat of the desires to the *women's quarters,* the seat of the passions to the *men's quarters,* in a house. The spleen, again, is the

[1] *Memorab.* i. 4, 5.

[2] *Timaeus,* 69, D; 74, A; 65, C; 72, G; 74, B, D; 80, E; 77, G; 78, E; 85, E.

napkin of the internal organs, by whose excretions it is saturated from time to time, and swells to a great size with inward impurity. "After this," he continues, "they shrouded the whole with flesh, throwing it forward, like a cushion, as a barrier against injuries from without." The blood he terms the *pasture* of the flesh. "To assist the process of nutrition," he goes on, "they divided the body into ducts, cutting trenches like those in a garden, so that, the body being a system of narrow conduits, the current of the veins might flow as from a perennial fountain-head. And when the end is at hand," he says, "the soul is cast loose from her moorings like a ship, and free to wander whither
she will." These, and a hundred similar fancies, 6
follow one another in quick succession. But those which I have pointed out are sufficient to demonstrate how great is the natural power of figurative language, and how largely metaphors conduce to sublimity, and to illustrate the important part which they play in all impassioned and descriptive passages.

That the use of figurative language, as of all 7
other beauties of style, has a constant tendency towards excess, is an obvious truth which I need not dwell upon. It is chiefly on this account that even Plato comes in for a large share of disparagement, because he is often carried away by a sort of

frenzy of language into an intemperate use of violent metaphors and inflated allegory. "It is not easy to remark" (he says in one place) "that a city ought to be blended like a bowl, in which the mad wine boils when it is poured out, but being disciplined by another and a sober god in that fair society produces a good and temperate drink.[1] Really, it is said, to speak of water as a "sober god," and of the process of mixing as a "discipline," is to talk like a
8 poet, and no very *sober* one either. It was such defects as these that the hostile critic[2] Caecilius made his ground of attack, when he had the boldness in his essay "On the Beauties of Lysias" to pronounce that writer superior in every respect to Plato. Now Caecilius was doubly unqualified for a judge: he loved Lysias better even than himself, and at the same time his hatred of Plato and all his works is greater even than his love for Lysias. Moreover, he is so blind a partisan that his very premises are open to dispute. He vaunts Lysias as a faultless and immaculate writer, while Plato is, according to him, full of blemishes. Now this is not the case: far from it.

[1] *Legg.* vi. 773, G.

[2] Reading ὁ μισῶν αὐτόν, by a conjecture of the translator.

XXXIII

But supposing now that we assume the existence of a really unblemished and irreproachable writer. Is it not worth while to raise the whole question whether in poetry and prose we should prefer sublimity accompanied by some faults, or a style which never rising above moderate excellence never stumbles and never requires correction? and again, whether the first place in literature is justly to be assigned to the more numerous, or the loftier excellences? For these are questions proper to an inquiry on the Sublime, and urgently asking for settlement.

I know, then, that the largest intellects are far 2
from being the most exact. A mind always intent on correctness is apt to be dissipated in trifles; but in great affluence of thought, as in vast material wealth, there must needs be an occasional neglect of detail. And is it not inevitably so? Is it not by risking nothing, by never aiming high, that a writer of low or middling powers keeps generally clear of faults and secure of blame? whereas the loftier walks of literature are by their very loftiness perilous? I am well aware, again, that there is a 3
law by which in all human productions the weak points catch the eye first, by which their faults

remain indelibly stamped on the memory, while their
4 beauties quickly fade away. Yet, though I have myself noted not a few faulty passages in Homer and in other authors of the highest rank, and though I am far from being partial to their failings, nevertheless I would call them not so much wilful blunders as oversights which were allowed to pass unregarded through that contempt of little things, that "brave disorder," which is natural to an exalted genius; and I still think that the greater excellences, though not everywhere equally sustained, ought always to be voted to the first place in literature, if for no other reason, for the mere grandeur of soul they evince. Let us take an instance: Apollonius in his *Argonautica* has given us a poem actually faultless; and in his pastoral poetry Theocritus is eminently happy, except when he occasionally attempts another style. And what then? Would you rather be a Homer or an
5 Apollonius? Or take Eratosthenes and his *Erigone*; because that little work is without a flaw, is he therefore a greater poet than Archilochus, with all his disorderly profusion? greater than that impetuous, that god-gifted genius, which chafed against the restraints of law? or in lyric poetry would you choose to be a Bacchylides or a Pindar? in tragedy a Sophocles or (save the mark!) an Io of Chios? Yet Io and Bacchylides never stumble, their style is

always neat, always pretty; while Pindar and Sophocles sometimes move onwards with a wide blaze of splendour, but often drop out of view in sudden and disastrous eclipse. Nevertheless no one in his senses would deny that a single play of Sophocles, the *Oedipus*, is of higher value than all the dramas of Io put together.

XXXIV

If the number and not the loftiness of an author's merits is to be our standard of success, judged by this test we must admit that Hyperides is a far superior orator to Demosthenes. For in Hyperides there is a richer modulation, a greater variety of excellence. He is, we may say, in everything second-best, like the champion of the *pentathlon*, who, though in every contest he has to yield the prize to some other combatant, is superior to the unpractised in all five.
Not only has he rivalled 2
the success of Demosthenes in everything but his manner of composition, but, as though that were not enough, he has taken in all the excellences and graces of Lysias as well. He knows when it is proper to speak with simplicity, and does not, like Demosthenes, continue the same key throughout. His touches of character are racy and sparkling, and full of a delicate flavour. Then how admirable

is his wit, how polished his raillery! How well-bred he is, how dexterous in the use of irony! His jests are pointed, but without any of the grossness and vulgarity of the old Attic comedy. He is skilled in making light of an opponent's argument, full of a well-aimed satire which amuses while it stings; and through all this there runs a pervading, may we not say, a matchless charm. He is most apt in moving compassion; his mythical digressions show a fluent ease, and he is perfect in bending his course and finding a way out of them without violence or effort. Thus when he tells the story of Leto he is really almost a poet; and his funeral oration shows a declamatory magnificence to which I hardly know
3 a parallel. Demosthenes, on the other hand, has no touches of character, none of the versatility, fluency, or declamatory skill of Hyperides. He is, in fact, almost entirely destitute of all those excellences which I have just enumerated. When he makes violent efforts to be humorous and witty, the only laughter he arouses is against himself; and the nearer he tries to get to the winning grace of Hyperides, the farther he recedes from it. Had he, for instance, attempted such a task as the little speech in defence of Phryne or Athenagoras, he would only have added to the reputation of his rival.
4 Nevertheless all the beauties of Hyperides, however numerous, cannot make him sublime. He never

exhibits strong feeling, has little energy, rouses no emotion; certainly he never kindles terror in the breast of his readers. But Demosthenes followed a great master,[1] and drew his consummate excellences, his high-pitched eloquence, his living passion, his copiousness, his sagacity, his speed—that mastery and power which can never be approached—from the highest of sources. These mighty, these heaven-sent gifts (I dare not call them human), he made his own both one and all. Therefore, I say, by the noble qualities which he does possess he remains supreme above all rivals, and throws a cloud over his failings, silencing by his thunders and blinding by his lightnings the orators of all ages. Yes, it would be easier to meet the lightning-stroke with steady eye than to gaze unmoved when his impassioned eloquence is sending out flash after flash.

XXXV

But in the case of Plato and Lysias there is, as I said, a further difference. Not only is Lysias vastly inferior to Plato in the degree of his merits, but in their number as well; and at the same time he is as far ahead of Plato in the number of his faults as he is behind in that of his merits.

[1] *I.e.* Thucydides. See the passage of Dionysius quoted in the Note.

2 What truth, then, was it that was present to those mighty spirits of the past, who, making whatever is greatest in writing their aim, thought it beneath them to be exact in every detail? Among many others especially this, that it was not in nature's plan for us her chosen children to be creatures base and ignoble,—no, she brought us into life, and into the whole universe, as into some great field of contest, that we should be at once spectators and ambitious rivals of her mighty deeds, and from the first implanted in our souls an invincible yearning for all that is great, all that is diviner than
3 ourselves. Therefore even the whole world is not wide enough for the soaring range of human thought, but man's mind often overleaps the very bounds of space.[1] When we survey the whole circle of life, and see it abounding everywhere in what is elegant, grand, and beautiful, we learn at once what is the
4 true end of man's being. And this is why nature prompts us to admire, not the clearness and usefulness of a little stream, but the Nile, the Danube, the Rhine, and far beyond all the Ocean; not to turn our wandering eyes from the heavenly fires, though often darkened, to the little flame kindled by human hands, however pure and steady its light; not to think that tiny lamp more wondrous than

[1] Comp. Lucretius on Epicurus: "Ergo vivida vis animi pervicit, et extra Processit longe flammantia moenia mundi," etc.

the caverns of Aetna, from whose raging depths are hurled up stones and whole masses of rock, and torrents sometimes come pouring from earth's centre of pure and living fire.

To sum the whole: whatever is useful or needful lies easily within man's reach; but he keeps his homage for what is astounding.

XXXVI

How much more do these principles apply to the Sublime in literature, where grandeur is never, as it sometimes is in nature, dissociated from utility and advantage. Therefore all those who have achieved it, however far from faultless, are still more than mortal. When a writer uses any other resource he shows himself to be a man; but the Sublime lifts him near to the great spirit of the Deity. He who makes no slips must be satisfied with negative approbation, but he who is sublime commands positive
reverence. Why need I add that each one of those 2
great writers often redeems all his errors by one grand and masterly stroke? But the strongest point of all is that, if you were to pick out all the blunders of Homer, Demosthenes, Plato, and all the greatest names in literature, and add them together, they would be found to bear a very small, or rather an infinitesimal proportion to the passages in which

these supreme masters have attained absolute perfection. Therefore it is that all posterity, whose judgment envy herself cannot impeach, has brought and bestowed on them the crown of glory, has guarded their fame until this day against all attack, and is likely to preserve it

> "As long as lofty trees shall grow,
> And restless waters seaward flow."

3 It has been urged by one writer that we should not prefer the huge disproportioned Colossus to the Doryphorus of Polycletus. But (to give one out of many possible answers) in art we admire exactness, in the works of nature magnificence; and it is from nature that man derives the faculty of speech. Whereas, then, in statuary we look for close resemblance to humanity, in literature we require some-
4 thing which transcends humanity. Nevertheless (to reiterate the advice which we gave at the beginning of this essay), since that success which consists in avoidance of error is usually the gift of art, while high, though unequal excellence is the attribute of genius, it is proper on all occasions to call in art as an ally to nature. By the combined resources of these two we may hope to achieve perfection.

Such are the conclusions which were forced upon me concerning the points at issue; but every one may consult his own taste.

XXXVII

To return, however, from this long digression; closely allied to metaphors are comparisons and similes, differing only in this * * *[1]

XXXVIII

Such absurdities as, "Unless you carry your brains next to the ground in your heels."[2] Hence it is necessary to know where to draw the line; for if ever it is overstepped the effect of the hyperbole is spoilt, being in such cases relaxed by overstraining, and producing the very opposite to the effect desired.
2 Isocrates, for instance, from an ambitious desire of lending everything a strong rhetorical colouring, shows himself in quite a childish light. Having in his Panegyrical Oration set himself to prove that the Athenian state has surpassed that of Sparta in her services to Hellas, he starts off at the very outset with these words: "Such is the power of language that it can extenuate what is great, and lend greatness to what is little, give freshness to what is antiquated, and describe what is recent so that it seems to be of the past."[3] Come, Isocrates (it might be asked), is

[1] The asterisks denote gaps in the original text.
[2] Pseud. Dem. de Halon. 45.
[3] Paneg. 8.

it thus that you are going to tamper with the facts about Sparta and Athens? This flourish about the power of language is like a signal hung out to warn
3 his audience not to believe him. We may repeat here what we said about figures, and say that the hyperbole is then most effective when it appears in disguise.[1] And this effect is produced when a writer, impelled by strong feeling, speaks in the accents of some tremendous crisis; as Thucydides does in describing the massacre in Sicily. "The Syracusans," he says, "went down after them, and slew those especially who were in the river, and the water was at once defiled, yet still they went on drinking it, though mingled with mud and gore, most of them even fighting for it."[2] The drinking of mud and gore, and even the fighting for it, is made credible
4 by the awful horror of the scene described. Similarly Herodotus on those who fell at Thermopylae: "Here as they fought, those who still had them, with daggers, the rest with hands and teeth, the barbarians buried them under their javelins."[3] That they fought with the teeth against heavy-armed assailants, and that they were buried with javelins, are perhaps hard sayings, but not incredible, for the reasons already explained. We can see that these circumstances have not been dragged in to produce a hyperbole, but that the hyperbole has grown naturally out of

[1] xvii. 1. [2] Thuc. vii. 84. [3] vii. 225.

the circumstances. For, as I am never tired of 5
explaining, in actions and passions verging on frenzy there lies a kind of remission and palliation of any licence of language. Hence some comic extravagances, however improbable, gain credence by their humour, such as—

> "He had a farm, a little farm, where space severely pinches;
> 'Twas smaller than the last despatch from Sparta by some inches."

For mirth is one of the passions, having its seat in 6
pleasure. And hyperboles may be employed either to increase or to lessen—since exaggeration is common to both uses. Thus in extenuating an opponent's argument we try to make it seem smaller than it is.

XXXIX

We have still left, my dear sir, the fifth of those sources which we set down at the outset as contributing to sublimity, that which consists in the mere arrangement of words in a certain order. Having already published two books dealing fully with this subject—so far at least as our investigations had carried us—it will be sufficient for the purpose of our present inquiry to add that harmony is an instrument which has a natural power, not only to win and to delight, but also in a remarkable degree

2 to exalt the soul and sway the heart of man. When we see that a flute kindles certain emotions in its hearers, rendering them almost beside themselves and full of an orgiastic frenzy, and that by starting some kind of rhythmical beat it compels him who listens to move in time and assimilate his gestures to the tune, even though he has no taste whatever for music; when we know that the sounds of a harp, which in themselves have no meaning, by the change of key, by the mutual relation of the notes, and their arrangement in symphony, often lay a wonderful spell
3 on an audience—though these are mere shadows and spurious imitations of persuasion, not, as I have said, genuine manifestations of human nature:—can we doubt that composition (being a kind of harmony of that language which nature has taught us, and which reaches, not our ears only, but our very souls), when it raises changing forms of words, of thoughts, of actions, of beauty, of melody, all of which are engrained in and akin to ourselves, and when by the blending of its manifold tones it brings home to the minds of those who stand by the feelings present to the speaker, and ever disposes the hearer to sympathise with those feelings, adding word to word, until it has raised a majestic and harmonious structure:—can we wonder if all this enchants us, wherever we meet with it, and filling us with the sense of pomp and dignity and sublimity, and whatever else it

embraces, gains a complete mastery over our minds? It would be mere infatuation to join issue on truths so universally acknowledged, and established by experience beyond dispute.[1]

Now to give an instance: that is doubtless a 4
sublime thought, indeed wonderfully fine, which Demosthenes applies to his decree: *τοῦτο τὸ ψήφισμα τὸν τότε τῇ πόλει περιστάντα κίνδυνον παρελθεῖν ἐποίησεν ὥσπερ νέφος*, "This decree caused the danger which then hung round our city to pass away like a cloud." But the modulation is as perfect as the sentiment itself is weighty. It is uttered wholly in the dactylic measure, the noblest and most magnificent of all measures, and hence forming the chief constituent in the finest metre we know, the heroic. [And it is with great judgment that the words *ὥσπερ νέφος* are reserved till the end.[2]] Supposing we transpose them from their proper place and read, say *τοῦτο τὸ ψήφισμα ὥσπερ νέφος ἐποίησε τὸν τότε κίνδυνον παρελθεῖν*—nay, let us merely cut off one syllable, reading *ἐποίησε παρελθεῖν ὡς νέφος*—and you will understand how close is the unison between harmony and sublimity. In the passage before us the words *ὥσπερ νέφος* move first in a heavy measure, which is metrically equivalent to four short syllables: but on removing

[1] Reading *ἀλλ' ἔοικε μανίᾳ*, and putting a full stop at *πίστις*.

[2] There is a break here in the text; but the context indicates the sense of the words lost, which has accordingly been supplied.

one syllable, and reading *ὡς νέφος*, the grandeur of movement is at once crippled by the abridgment. So conversely if you lengthen into *ὡσπερεὶ νέφος*, the meaning is still the same, but it does not strike the ear in the same manner, because by lingering over the final syllables you at once dissipate and relax the abrupt grandeur of the passage.

XL

There is another method very efficient in exalting a style. As the different members of the body, none of which, if severed from its connection, has any intrinsic excellence, unite by their mutual combination to form a complete and perfect organism, so also the elements of a fine passage, by whose separation from one another its high quality is simultaneously dissipated and evaporates, when joined in one organic whole, and still further compacted by the bond of harmony, by the mere
2 rounding of the period gain power of tone. In fact, a clause may be said to derive its sublimity from the joint contributions of a number of particulars. And further (as we have shown at large elsewhere), many writers in prose and verse, though their natural powers were not high, were perhaps even low, and though the terms they employed were usually common and popular and conveying no

impression of refinement, by the mere harmony of their composition have attained dignity and elevation, and avoided the appearance of meanness. Such among many others are Philistus, Aristophanes occasionally, Euripides almost always. Thus when 3
Heracles says, after the murder of his children,

> "I'm full of woes, I have no room for more,"[1]

the words are quite common, but they are made sublime by being cast in a fine mould. By changing their position you will see that the poetical quality of Euripides depends more on his arrangement than on his thoughts. Compare his lines on Dirce 4
dragged by the bull—

> "Whatever crossed his path,
> Caught in his victim's form, he seized, and dragging
> Oak, woman, rock, now here, now there, he flies."[2]

The circumstance is noble in itself, but it gains in vigour because the language is disposed so as not to hurry the movement, not running, as it were, on wheels, because there is a distinct stress on each word, and the time is delayed, advancing slowly to a pitch of stately sublimity.

XLI

Nothing so much degrades the tone of a style as an effeminate and hurried movement in the language,

[1] *H. F.* 1245. [2] *Antiope* (Nauck, 222).

such as is produced by pyrrhics and trochees and dichorees falling in time together into a regular dance measure. Such abuse of rhythm is sure to savour of coxcombry and petty affectation, and grows tiresome in the highest degree by a monotonous
2 sameness of tone. But its worst effect is that, as those who listen to a ballad have their attention distracted from its subject and can think of nothing but the tune, so an over-rhythmical passage does not affect the hearer by the meaning of its words, but merely by their cadence, so that sometimes, knowing where the pause must come, they beat time with the speaker, striking the expected close like dancers before the stop is reached. Equally undignified is the splitting up of a sentence into a number of little words and short syllables crowded too closely together and forced into cohesion,—hammered, as it were, successively together,—after the manner of mortice and tenon.[1]

XLII

Sublimity is further diminished by cramping the diction. Deformity instead of grandeur ensues from over-compression. Here I am not referring to a judicious compactness of phrase, but to a style

[1] I must refer to Weiske's Note, which I have followed, for the probable interpretation of this extraordinary passage.

which is dwarfed, and its force frittered away. To cut your words too short is to prune away their sense, but to be concise is to be direct. On the other hand, we know that a style becomes lifeless by over-extension, I mean by being relaxed to an unseasonable length.

XLIII

The use of mean words has also a strong tendency to degrade a lofty passage. Thus in that description of the storm in Herodotus the matter is admirable, but some of the words admitted are beneath the dignity of the subject; such, perhaps, as "the seas having *seethed*," because the ill-sounding phrase "having seethed" detracts much from its impressiveness: or when he says "the wind wore away," and "those who clung round the wreck met with an unwelcome end."[1] "Wore away" is ignoble and vulgar, and "unwelcome" inadequate to the extent of the disaster.

Similarly Theopompus, after giving a fine picture 2
of the Persian king's descent against Egypt, has exposed the whole to censure by certain paltry expressions. "There was no city, no people of Asia, which did not send an embassy to the king; no product of the earth, no work of art, whether beau-

[1] Hdt. vii. 188, 191, 13.

tiful or precious, which was not among the gifts brought to him. Many and costly were the hangings and robes, some purple, some embroidered, some white; many the tents, of cloth of gold, furnished with all things useful; many the tapestries and couches of great price. Moreover, there was gold and silver plate richly wrought, goblets and bowls, some of which might be seen studded with gems, and others besides worked in relief with great skill and at vast expense. Besides these there were suits of armour in number past computation, partly Greek, partly foreign, endless trains of baggage animals and fat cattle for slaughter, many bushels of spices, many panniers and sacks and sheets of writing-paper; and all other necessaries in the same proportion. And there was salt meat of all kinds of beasts in immense quantity, heaped together to such a height as to show at a distance like mounds and hills thrown up one
3 against another." He runs off from the grander parts of his subject to the meaner, and sinks where he ought to rise. Still worse, by his mixing up *panniers* and *spices* and *bags* with his wonderful recital of that vast and busy scene one would imagine that he was describing a kitchen. Let us suppose that in that show of magnificence some one had taken a set of wretched baskets and bags and placed them in the midst, among vessels of gold,

jewelled bowls, silver plate, and tents and goblets of gold; how incongruous would have seemed the effect! Now just in the same way these petty words, introduced out of season, stand out like deformities and blots on the diction. These details 4
might have been given in one or two broad strokes, as when he speaks of mounds being heaped together. So in dealing with the other preparations he might have told us of "waggons and camels and a long train of baggage animals loaded with all kinds of supplies for the luxury and enjoyment of the table," or have mentioned "piles of grain of every species, and of all the choicest delicacies required by the art of the cook or the taste of the epicure," or (if he must needs be so very precise) he might have spoken of "whatever dainties are supplied by those who lay or those who dress the banquet." In our 5
sublimer efforts we should never stoop to what is sordid and despicable, unless very hard pressed by some urgent necessity. If we would write becomingly, our utterance should be worthy of our theme. We should take a lesson from nature, who when she planned the human frame did not set our grosser parts, or the ducts for purging the body, in our face, but as far as she could concealed them, "diverting," as Xenophon says, "those canals as far as possible from our senses,"[1] and thus shunning

[1] *Mem.* i. 4. 6.

in any part to mar the beauty of the whole creature.

6 However, it is not incumbent on us to specify and enumerate whatever diminishes a style. We have now pointed out the various means of giving it nobility and loftiness. It is clear, then, that whatever is contrary to these will generally degrade and deform it.

XLIV

There is still another point which remains to be cleared up, my dear Terentian, and on which I shall not hesitate to add some remarks, to gratify your inquiring spirit. It relates to a question which was recently put to me by a certain philosopher. "To me," he said, "in common, I may say, with many others, it is a matter of wonder that in the present age, which produces many highly skilled in the arts of popular persuasion, many of keen and active powers, many especially rich in every pleasing gift of language, the growth of highly exalted and wide-reaching genius has with a few rare exceptions almost entirely ceased. So universal is the dearth of eloquence which prevails throughout the world.
2 Must we really," he asked, "give credit to that oft-repeated assertion that democracy is the kind nurse of genius, and that high literary excellence has

flourished with her prime and faded with her decay?
Liberty, it is said, is all-powerful to feed the aspira-
tions of high intellects, to hold out hope, and keep
alive the flame of mutual rivalry and ambitious
struggle for the highest place. Moreover, the prizes 3
which are offered in every free state keep the spirits
of her foremost orators whetted by perpetual
exercise;[1] they are, as it were, ignited by friction,
and naturally blaze forth freely because they are
surrounded by freedom. But we of to-day," he
continued, "seem to have learnt in our childhood
the lessons of a benignant despotism, to have been
cradled in her habits and customs from the time
when our minds were still tender, and never to
have tasted the fairest and most fruitful fountain
of eloquence, I mean liberty. Hence we develop
nothing but a fine genius for flattery. This is the 4
reason why, though all other faculties are consistent
with the servile condition, no slave ever became an
orator; because in him there is a dumb spirit which
will not be kept down: his soul is chained: he is
like one who has learnt to be ever expecting a blow.
For, as Homer says—

> "'The day of slavery 5
> Takes half our manly worth away.'[2]

As, then (if what I have heard is credible), the cages

[1] Comp. Pericles in Thuc. ii., *ἆθλα γὰρ οἷς κεῖται ἀρετῆς μέγιστα, τοῖς δὲ καὶ ἄνδρες ἄριστα πολιτεύουσιν.*

[2] *Od.* xvii. 322.

in which those pigmies commonly called dwarfs are reared not only stop the growth of the imprisoned creature, but absolutely make him smaller by compressing every part of his body, so all despotism, however equitable, may be defined as a cage of the soul and a general prison."

6 My answer was as follows: "My dear friend, it is so easy, and so characteristic of human nature, always to find fault with the present.[1] Consider, now, whether the corruption of genius is to be attributed, not to a world-wide peace,[2] but rather to the war within us which knows no limit, which engages all our desires, yes, and still further to the bad passions which lay siege to us to-day, and make utter havoc and spoil of our lives. Are we not enslaved, nay, are not our careers completely shipwrecked, by love of gain, that fever which rages unappeased in us all, and love of pleasure?—one the most debasing, the other the most ignoble
7 of the mind's diseases. When I consider it I can find no means by which we, who hold in such high honour, or, to speak more correctly, who idolise boundless riches, can close the door of our souls against those evil spirits which grow up with them. For Wealth unmeasured and unbridled

[1] Comp. Byron, "The good old times,—all times when old are good."

[2] A euphemism for "a world-wide tyranny."

is dogged by Extravagance: she sticks close to him, and treads in his footsteps: and as soon as he opens the gates of cities or of houses she enters with him and makes her abode with him. And after a time they build their nests (to use a wise man's words [1]) in that corner of life, and speedily set about breeding, and beget Boastfulness, and Vanity, and Wantonness, no base-born children, but their very own. And if these also, the offspring of Wealth, be allowed to come to their prime, quickly they engender in the soul those pitiless tyrants, Violence, and Lawlessness, and Shamelessness. Whenever a 8
man takes to worshipping what is mortal and irrational [2] in him, and neglects to cherish what is immortal, these are the inevitable results. He never looks up again; he has lost all care for good report; by slow degrees the ruin of his life goes on, until it is consummated all round; all that is great in his soul fades, withers away, and is despised.

"If a judge who passes sentence for a bribe can 9
never more give a free and sound decision on a point of justice or honour (for to him who takes a bribe honour and justice must be measured by his own interests), how can we of to-day expect, when the whole life of each one of us is controlled by bribery, while we lie in wait for other men's death and plan how to get a place in their wills, when

[1] Plato, *Rep.* ix. 573, E. [2] Reading κάνόητα.

we buy gain, from whatever source, each one of us,
with our very souls in our slavish greed, how, I say,
can we expect, in the midst of such a moral pesti-
lence, that there is still left even one liberal and
impartial critic, whose verdict will not be biassed
by avarice in judging of those great works which
10 live on through all time? Alas! I fear that for
such men as we are it is better to serve than to be
free. If our appetites were let loose altogether
against our neighbours, they would be like wild
beasts uncaged, and bring a deluge of calamity on
the whole civilised world."

11 I ended by remarking generally that the genius of the present age is wasted by that indifference which with a few exceptions runs through the whole of life. If we ever shake off our apathy[1] and apply ourselves to work, it is always with a view to pleasure or applause, not for that solid advantage which is worthy to be striven for and held in honour.

12 We had better then leave this generation to its fate, and turn to what follows, which is the subject of the passions, to which we promised early in this treatise to devote a separate work.[2] They play an important part in literature generally, and especially in relation to the Sublime.

[1] Comp. Thuc. vi. 26. 2, for this sense of ἀναλαμβάνειν.
[2] iii. 5.

NOTES ON LONGINUS

I. 2. 10. THERE seems to be an antithesis implied in πολιτικοῖς τεθεωρηκέναι, referring to the well-known distinction between the πρακτικὸς βίος and the θεωρητικὸς βίος.

4. 27. I have ventured to return to the original reading, διεφώτισεν, though all editors seem to have adopted the correction διεφόρησεν, on account, I suppose, of σκηπτοῦ. To *illumine* a large subject, as a landscape is lighted up at night by a flash of lightning, is surely a far more vivid and intelligible expression than to *sweep away* a subject.[1]

III. 2. 17. φορβειᾶς δ'ἄτερ, lit. "without a cheek-strap," which was worn by trumpeters to assist them in regulating their breath. The line is contracted from two of Sophocles's, and Longinus's point is that the extravagance of Cleitarchus is not that of a strong but ill-regulated nature, but the ludicrous straining after grandeur of a writer at once feeble and pretentious.

Ruhnken gives an extract from some inedited "versus politici" of Tzetzes, in which are some amusing specimens of those felicities of language Longinus is here laughing at. Stones are the "bones," rivers the "veins," of the earth; the moon is "the sigma of the sky" (C the old form of Σ);

[1] Comp. for the metaphor Goethe, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, B 8. "Wie vor einem Blitz erleuchteten sich uns alle Folgen dieses herrlichen Gedankens."

sailors, "the ants of ocean"; the strap of a pedlar's pack, "the girdle of his load"; pitch, "the ointment of doors," and so on.

IV. 4. 4. The play upon the double meaning of *κόρα*, (1) maiden, (2) pupil of the eye, can hardly be kept in English. It is worthy of remark that our text of Xenophon has *ἐν τοῖς θαλάμοις*, a perfectly natural expression. Such a variation would seem to point to a very early corruption of ancient manuscripts, or to extraordinary inaccuracy on the part of Longinus, who, indeed, elsewhere displays great looseness of citation, confusing together totally different passages.

9. *ἰταμόν*. I can make nothing of this word. Various corrections have been suggested, but with little certainty.

5. 10. *ὡς φωρίου τινος ἐφαπτόμενος*, literally, "as though he were laying hands on a piece of stolen property." The point seems to be, that plagiarists, like other robbers, show no discrimination in their pilferings, seizing what comes first to hand.

VIII. 1. 20. *ἐδάφους*. I have avoided the rather harsh confusion of metaphor which this word involves, taken in connection with *πηγαί*.

IX. 2. 13. *ἀπήχημα*, properly an "echo," a metaphor rather Greek than English.

X. 2. 13. *χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας*, lit. "more wan than grass"—of the sickly yellow hue which would appear on a dark Southern face under the influence of violent emotion.[1]

3. 6. The words *ἢ γάρ . . . τέθνηκεν* are omitted in the translation, being corrupt, and giving no satisfactory sense. Ruhnken corrects, *ἀλογιστεῖ, φρονεῖ, πτοεῖται, ἢ π. ὁ. τ.*

[1] The notion of *yellowness*, as associated with grass, is made intelligible by a passage in Longus, i. 17. 19. χλωρότερον τὸ πρόσωπον ἦν πόας θερινῆς.

18. σπλάγχνοισι κακῶς ἀναβαλλομένοισι. Probably of sea-sickness; and so I find Ruhnken took it, quoting Plutarch, *T.* ii. 831: ἐμοῦντος τοῦ ἑτέρου, καὶ λέγοντος τὰ σπλάγχνα ἐκβάλλειν. An objection on the score of *taste* would be out of place in criticising the laureate of the Arimaspi.

X. 7. 2. τὰς ἐξοχὰς ἀριστίνδην ἐκκαθήραντες. ἀριστίνδην ἐκκαθήραντες appears to be a condensed phrase for ἀριστίνδην ἐκλέξαντες καὶ ἐκκαθήραντες. "Having chosen the most striking circumstances *par excellence*, and having relieved them of all superfluity," would perhaps give the literal meaning. Longinus seems conscious of some strangeness in his language, making a quasi-apology in ὡς ἂν εἴποι τις.

3. Partly with the help of Toup, we may emend this corrupt passage as follows: λυμαίνεται γὰρ ταῦτα τὸ ὅλον, ὡσανεὶ ψήγματα ἢ ἀραιώματα, τὰ ἐμποιοῦντα μέγεθος τῇ πρὸς ἄλληλα σχέσει συντετειχισμένα. τὸ ὅλον here = "omnino." To explain the process of corruption, τά would easily drop out after the final -τα in ἀραιώματα; συνοικονομούμενα is simply a corruption of συνοικοδομούμενα, which is itself a gloss on συντετειχισμένα, having afterwards crept into the text; μέγεθος became corrupted into μεγέθη through the error of some copyist, who wished to make it agree with ἐμποιοῦντα. The whole may be translated: "Such [interpolations], like so many patches or rents, mar altogether the effect of those details which, by being built up in an uninterrupted series [τῇ πρὸς ἄλληλα σχ. συντετ.], produce sublimity in a work."

XII. 4. 2. ἐν αὐτῷ; the sense seems clearly to require ἐν αὐτῷ.

XIV. 3. 16. μὴ . . . ὑπερήμερον. Most of the editors insert οὐ before φθέγξαιτο, thus ruining the sense of this fine

passage. Longinus has just said that a writer should always work with an eye to posterity. If (he adds) he thinks of nothing but the taste and judgment of his contemporaries, he will have no chance of "leaving something so written that the world will not willingly let it die." A book, then, which is τοῦ ἰδίου βίου καὶ χρόνου ὑπερήμερος, is a book which is in advance of its own times. Such were the poems of Lucretius, of Milton, of Wordsworth.[1]

XV. 5. 23. ποκοειδεῖς καὶ ἀμαλάκτους, lit. "like raw, undressed wool."

XVII. 1. 25. I construct the infinit. with ὕποπτον, though the ordinary interpretation joins τὸ διὰ σχημάτων πανουργεῖν: "proprium est *verborum lenociniis* suspicionem movere" (Weiske).

2. 8. παραληφθεῖσα. This word has given much trouble; but is it not simply a continuation of the metaphor implied in ἐπικουρία? παραλαμβάνειν τινα, in the sense of calling in an ally, is a common enough use. This would be clearer if we could read παραληφθεῖσι. I have omitted τοῦ πανουργεῖν in translating, as it seems to me to have evidently crept in from above (p. 33, l. 25). ἡ τοῦ πανουργεῖν τέχνη, "the art of playing the villain," is surely, in Longinus's own words, δεινὸν καὶ ἔκφυλον, "a startling novelty" of language.

12. τῷ φωτὶ αὐτῷ. The words may remind us of Shelley's "Like a poet *hidden in the light of thought.*"

XVIII. 1. 24. The distinction between πεῦσις or πύσμα and ἐρώτησις or ἐρώτημα is said to be that ἐρώτησις is a

[1] Compare the "Geflügelte Worte" in the Vorspiel to Goethe's *Faust*:

Was glänzt, ist für den Augenblick geboren,
Das Aechte bleibt der Nachwelt unverloren.

simple question, which can be answered yes or no; πεῦσις a fuller inquiry, requiring a fuller answer. *Aquila Romanus in libro de figuris sententiarum et elocutionis*, § 12 (Weiske).

XXXI. 1. 11. ἀναγκοφαγῆσαι, properly of the fixed diet of athletes, which seems to have been excessive in quantity, and sometimes nauseous in quality. I do not know what will be thought of my rendering here; it is certainly not elegant, but it was necessary to provide some sort of equivalent to the Greek. "Swallow," which the other translators give, is quite inadequate. We require a threefold combination—(1) To swallow (2) something nasty (3) for the sake of prospective advantage.

XXXII. 1. 3. The text is in great confusion here. Following a hint in Vahlin's critical note, I have transposed the words thus: ὁ καιρὸς δὲ τῆς χρείας ὅρος· ἔνθα τὰ πάθη χειμάρρου δίκην ἐλαύνεται, καὶ τὴν πολυπλήθειαν αὐτῶν ὡς ἀναγκαίαν ἐνταῦθα συνεφέλκεται· ὁ γὰρ Δ., ὅρος καὶ τῶν τοιούτων, ἄνθρωποι, φησίν, κ.τ.λ.

8. 16. Some words have probably been lost here. The sense of πλήν, and the absence of antithesis to οὗτος μέν, point in this direction. The original reading may have been something of this sort: πλὴν οὗτος μὲν ὑπὸ φιλονεικίας παρήγετο· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τὰ θέματα τίθησιν ὁμολογούμενα, the sense being that, though we may allow something to the partiality of Caecilius, yet this does not excuse him from arguing on premises which are unsound.

XXXIV. 4. 10. ὁ δὲ ἔνθεν ἑλών, κ.τ.λ. Probably the darkest place in the whole treatise. Toup cites a remarkable passage from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, from which we may perhaps conclude that Longinus is referring here to Thucydides, the traditional master of Demosthenes. *De Thucyd.* § 53, Ῥητόρων δὲ Δημοσθένης μόνος Θουκυδίδου ζηλωτὸς ἐγένετο κατὰ πολλά, καὶ προσέθηκε τοῖς πολιτικοῖς

λόγοις, παρ' ἐκείνου λαβών, ἃς οὔτε Ἀντιφῶν, οὔτε Λυσίας, οὔτε Ἰσοκράτης, οἱ πρωτεύσαντες τῶν τότε ῥητόρων, ἔσχον ἀρετάς, τὰ τάχη λέγω, καὶ τὰς συστροφάς, καὶ τοὺς τόνους, καὶ τὸ στρυφνόν, καὶ τὴν ἐξεγείρουσαν τὰ πάθη δεινότητα. So close a parallel can hardly be accidental.

XXXV. 4. 5. Longinus probably had his eye on the splendid lines in Pindar's *First Pythian*: τᾶς [Αἴτνας] ἐρεύγονται μὲν ἀπλάτου πυρὸς ἁγνόταται | ἐκ μυχῶν παγαί, ποταμοὶ δ' | ἁμέραισιν μὲν προχέοντι ῥόον καπνοῦ—αἴθων'· ἀλλ' ἐν ὄρφναισιν πέτρας | φοίνισσα κυλινδομένα φλὸξ ἐς βαθεῖ- | αν φέρει πόντου πλάκα σὺν πατάγῳ, which I find has also been pointed out by Toup, who remarks that ἁγνόταται confirms the reading αὐτοῦ μόνου here, which has been suspected without reason.

XXXVIII. 2. 7. Comp. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 267, A: Τισίαν δὲ Γοργίαν τε ἐάσομεν εὕδειν, οἳ πρὸ τῶν ἀληθῶν τὰ εἰκότα εἶδον ὡς τιμητέα μᾶλλον, τά τε αὖ σμικρὰ μέγαλα καὶ τὰ μέγαλα σμικρὰ ποιοῦσι φαίνεσθαι διὰ ῥώμην λόγου, καινά τε ἀρχαίως τά τ' ἐναντία καινῶς, συντομίαν τε λόγων καὶ ἄπειρα μήκη περὶ πάντων ἀνεῦρον.

APPENDIX

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LESS KNOWN WRITERS MENTIONED IN THE TREATISE ON THE SUBLIME

AMMONIUS. — Alexandrian grammarian, carried on the school of Aristarchus previously to the reign of Augustus. The allusion here is to a work on the passages in which Plato has imitated Homer. (Suidas, *s.v.*; Schol. on Hom. Il. ix. 540, quoted by Jahn.)

AMPHIKRATES.—Author of a book *On Famous Men*, referred to by Athenaeus, xiii. 576, G, and Diog. Laert. ii. 101. C. Muller, *Hist. Gr. Fragm.* iv. p. 300, considers him to be the Athenian rhetorician who, according to Plutarch (*Lucullus*, c. 22), retired to Seleucia, and closed his life at the Court of Kleopatra, daughter of Mithridates and wife of Tigranes (Pauly, *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft*). Plutarch tells a story illustrative of his arrogance. Being asked by the Seleucians to open a school of rhetoric, he replied, "A dish is not large enough for a dolphin" (ὡς οὐδὲ λεκάνῃ δελφῖνα χωροίη), v. *Luculli*, c. 22, quoted by Pearce.

ARISTEAS.—A name involved in a mist of fable. According to Suidas he was a contemporary of Kroesus, though Herodotus assigns to him a much remoter antiquity. The latter authority describes him as visiting the northern peoples of Europe and recording his travels in an epic poem,

a fragment of which is given here by Longinus. The passage before us appears to be intended as the words of some Arimaspian, who, as belonging to a remote inland race, expresses his astonishment that any men could be found bold enough to commit themselves to the mercy of the sea, and tries to describe the terror of human beings placed in such a situation (Pearce ad. l.; Abicht on Hdt. iv. 12; Suidas, *s.v.*)

BAKCHYLIDES, nephew and pupil of the great Simonides, flourished about 460 B.C. He followed his uncle to the Court of Hiero at Syracuse, and enjoyed the patronage of that despot. After Hiero's death he returned to his home in Keos; but finding himself discontented with the mode of life pursued in a free Greek community, for which his experiences at Hiero's Court may well have disqualified him, he retired to Peloponnesus, where he died. His works comprise specimens of almost every kind of lyric composition, as practised by the Greeks of his time. Horace is said to have imitated him in his *Prophecy of Nereus*, c. I. xv. (Pauly, as above). So far as we can judge from what remains of his works, he was distinguished rather by elegance than by force. A considerable fragment on the Blessings of Peace has been translated by Mr. J. A. Symonds in his work on the Greek poets. He is made the subject of a very bitter allusion by Pindar (Ol. ii. s. fin. c. Schol.) We may suppose that the stern and lofty spirit of Pindar had little sympathy with the "tearful" (Catullus, xxxviii.) strains of Simonides or his imitators.

CAECILIUS, a native of Kale Akte in Sicily, and hence known as Caecilius Kalaktinus, lived in Rome at the time of Augustus. He is mentioned with distinction as a learned Greek rhetorician and grammarian, and was the author of numerous works, frequently referred to by Plutarch and other later writers. He may be regarded as one of the most

distinguished Greek rhetoricians of his time. His works, all of which have perished, comprised, among many others, commentaries on Antipho and Lysias; several treatises on Demosthenes, among which is a dissertation on the genuine and spurious speeches, and another comparing that orator with Cicero; "On the Distinction between Athenian and Asiatic Eloquence"; and the work on the Sublime, referred to by Longinus (Pauly). The criticism of Longinus on the above work may be thus summed up: Caecilius is censured (1) as failing to rise to the dignity of his subject; (2) as missing the cardinal points; and (3) as failing in practical utility. He wastes his energy in tedious attempts to define the Sublime, but does not tell us how it is to be attained (I. i.) He is further blamed for omitting to deal with the Pathetic (VIII. i. *sqq.*) He allows only two metaphors to be employed together in the same passage (XXXII. ii.) He extols Lysias as a far greater writer than Plato (*ib.* viii.), and is a bitter assailant of Plato's style (*ib.*) On the whole, he seems to have been a cold and uninspired critic, finding his chief pleasure in minute verbal details, and incapable of rising to an elevated and extensive view of his subject.

Eratosthenes, a native of Cyrene, born in 275 B.C.; appointed by Ptolemy III. Euergetes as the successor of Kallimachus in the post of librarian in the great library of Alexandria. He was the teacher of Aristophanes of Byzantium, and his fame as a man of learning is testified by the various fanciful titles which were conferred on him, such as "The Pentathlete," "The second Plato," etc. His great work was a treatise on geography (Lübker).

Gorgias of Leontini, according to some authorities a pupil of Empedokles, came, when already advanced in years, as ambassador from his native city to ask help against Syracuse (427 B.C.) Here he attracted notice by a novel style of eloquence. Some time after he settled permanently in

Greece, wandering from city to city, and acquiring wealth and fame by practising and teaching rhetoric. We find him last in Larissa, where he died at the age of a hundred in 375 B.C. As a teacher of eloquence Gorgias belongs to what is known as the Sicilian school, in which he followed the steps of his predecessors, Korax and Tisias. At the time when this school arose the Greek ear was still accustomed to the rhythm and beat of poetry, and the whole rhetorical system of the Gorgian school (compare the phrases γοργίεια σχήματα, γοργιάζειν) is built on a poetical plan (Lübker, *Reallexikon des classischen Alterthums*). Hermogenes, as quoted by Jahn, appears to classify him among the "hollow pedants" (ὑπόξυλοι σοφισταί), "who," he says, "talk of vultures as 'living tombs,' to which they themselves would best be committed, and indulge in many other such frigid conceits." (With the metaphor censured by Longinus compare Achilles Tatius, III. v. 50, ed. Didot.) See also Plato, *Phaedrus*, 267, A.

HEGESIAS of Magnesia, rhetorician and historian, contemporary of Timaeus (300 B.C.) He belongs to the period of the decline of Greek learning, and Cicero treats him as the representative of the decline of taste. His style was harsh and broken in character, and a parody on the Old Attic. He wrote a life of Alexander the Great, of which Plutarch (*Alexander*, c. 3) gives the following specimen: "On the day of Alexander's birth the temple of Artemis in Ephesus was burnt down, a coincidence which occasions Hegesias to utter a conceit frigid enough to extinguish the conflagration. 'It was natural,' he says, 'that the temple should be burnt down, as Artemis was engaged with bringing Alexander into the world'" (Pauly, with the references).

HEKATAEUS of Miletus, the logographer; born in 549 B.C., died soon after the battle of Plataea. He was the author of two works—(1) περίοδος γῆς; and (2) γενεηλογίαι. The *Periodos* deals in two books, first with Europe, then with

Asia and Libya. The quotation in the text is from his genealogies (Lübker).

Ion of Chios, poet, historian, and philosopher, highly distinguished among his contemporaries, and mentioned by Strabo among the celebrated men of the island. He won the tragic prize at Athens in 452 B.C., and Aristophanes (*Peace*, 421 B.C.) speaks of him as already dead. He was not less celebrated as an elegiac poet, and we still possess some specimens of his elegies, which are characterised by an Anacreontic spirit, a cheerful, joyous tone, and even by a certain degree of inspiration. He wrote also Skolia, Hymns, and Epigrams, and was a pretty voluminous writer in prose (Pauly). Compare the Scholiast on Ar. *Peace*, 801.

Kallisthenes of Olynthus, a near relative of Aristotle; born in 360, and educated by the philosopher as fellow-pupil with Alexander, afterwards the Great. He subsequently visited Athens, where he enjoyed the friendship of Theophrastus, and devoted himself to history and natural philosophy. He afterwards accompanied Alexander on his Asiatic expedition, but soon became obnoxious to the tyrant on account of his independent and manly bearing, which he carried even to the extreme of rudeness and arrogance. He at last excited the enmity of Alexander to such a degree that the latter took the opportunity afforded by the conspiracy of Hermolaus, in which Kallisthenes was accused of participating, to rid himself of his former school companion, whom he caused to be put to death. He was the author of various historical and scientific works. Of the latter two are mentioned—(1) *On the Nature of the Eye*; (2) *On the Nature of Plants.* Among his historical works are mentioned (1) the *Phocian War* (read "Phocicum" for v. l. "Troikum" in Cic. *Epp. ad Div.* v. 12); (2) a *History of Greece* in ten books; (3) τὰ Περσικά, apparently identical with the description of Alexander's march, of which we still possess fragments. As

an historian he seems to have displayed an undue love of recording signs and wonders. Polybius, however (vi. 45), classes him among the best historical writers. His style is said by Cicero (*de Or.* ii. 14) to approximate to the rhetorical (Pauly).

Kleitarchus, a contemporary of Alexander, accompanied that monarch on his Asiatic expedition, and wrote a history of the same in twelve books, which must have included at least a short retrospect on the early history of Asia. His talents are spoken of in high terms, but his credit as an historian is held very light—"probatur ingenium, fides infamatur," Quint. x. 1, 74. Cicero also (*de Leg.* i. 2) ranks him very low. That his credit as an historian was sacrificed to a childish credulity and a foolish love of fable and adventure is sufficiently testified by the pretty numerous fragments which still remain (Pauly). Demetrius Phalereus, quoted by Pearce, quotes a grandiloquent description of the wasp taken from Kleitarchus, "feeding on the mountain-side, her home the hollow oak."

Matris, a native of Thebes, author of a panegyric on Herakles, whether in verse or prose is uncertain. In one passage Athenaeus speaks of him as an Athenian, but this must be a mistake. Toup restores a verse from an allusion in Diodorus Siculus (i. 24), which, if genuine, would agree well with the description given of him by Longinus: Ηρακλέα καλέεσκεν, ὅτι κλέος ἔσχε διὰ Ἥραν (see Toup ad Long. III. ii.)

Philistus of Syracuse, a relative of the elder Dionysius, whom he assisted with his wealth in his attack on the liberty of that city, and remained with him until 386 B.C., when he was banished by the jealous suspicions of the tyrant. He retired to Epirus, where he remained until Dionysius's death. The younger Dionysius recalled him, wishing to employ him in the character of supporter against Dion. By

his instrumentality it would seem that Dion and Plato were banished from Syracuse. He commanded the fleet in the struggle between Dion and Dionysius, and lost a battle, whereupon he was seized and put to death by the people. During his banishment he wrote his historical work, τὰ Σικελικά, divided into two parts and numbering eleven books. The first division embraced the history of Sicily from the earliest times down to the capture of Agrigentum seven books), and the remaining four books dealt with the life of Dionysius the elder. He afterwards added a supplement in two books, giving an account of the younger Dionysius, which he did not, however, complete. He is described as an imitator, though at a great distance, of Thucydides, and hence was known as "the little Thucydides." As an historian he is deficient in conscientiousness and candour; he appears as a partisan of Dionysius, and seeks to throw a veil over his discreditable actions. Still he belongs to the most important of the Greek historians (Lübker).

THEODORUS of Gadara, a rhetorician in the first century after Christ; tutor of Tiberius, first in Rome, afterwards in Rhodes, from which town he called himself a Rhodian, and where Tiberius during his exile diligently attended his instruction. He was the author of various grammatical and other works, but his fame chiefly rested on his abilities as a teacher, in which capacity he seems to have had great influence (Pauly). He was the author of that famous description of Tiberius which is given by Suetonius (*Tib.* 57), πηλὸς αἵματι πεφυραμένος, "A clod kneaded together with blood."[1]

THEOPOMPUS, a native of Chios; born 380 B.C. He came to Athens while still a boy, and studied eloquence under Isokrates, who is said, in comparing him with another pupil, Ephorus, to have made use of the image which we find in

[1] A remarkable parallel, if not actually an imitation, occurs in Goethe's *Faust*, "Du Spottgeburt von Dreck und Feuer."

Longinus, c. ii. "Theopompus," he said, "needs the curb, Ephorus the spur" (Suidas, quoted by Jahn ad v.) He appeared with applause in various great cities as an advocate, but especially distinguished himself in the contest of eloquence instituted by Artemisia at the obsequies of her husband Mausolus, where he won the prize. He afterwards devoted himself to historical composition. His great work was a history of Greece, in which he takes up the thread of Thucydides's narrative, and carries it on uninterruptedly in twelve books down to the battle of Knidus, seventeen years later. Here he broke off, and began a new work entitled *The Philippics*, in fifty-eight books. This work dealt with the history of Greece in the Macedonian period, but was padded out to a preposterous bulk by all kinds of digressions on mythological, historical, or social topics. Only a few fragments remain. He earned an ill name among ancient critics by the bitterness of his censures, his love of the marvellous, and the inordinate length of his digressions. His style is by some critics censured as feeble, and extolled by others as clear, nervous, and elevated (Lübker and Pauly).

Timaeus, a native of Tauromenium in Sicily; born about 352 B.C. Being driven out of Sicily by Agathokles, he lived a retired life for fifty years in Athens, where he composed his History. Subsequently he returned to Sicily, and died at the age of ninety-six in 256 B.C. His chief work was a *History of Sicily* from the earliest times down to the 129th Olympiad. It numbered sixty-eight books, and consisted of two principal divisions, whose limits cannot now be ascertained. In a separate work he handled the campaigns of Pyrrhus, and also wrote *Olympionikae*, probably dealing with chronological matters. Timaeus has been severely criticised and harshly condemned by the ancients, especially by Polybius, who denies him every faculty required by the historical writer (xii. 3-15, 23-28). And though Cicero

differs from this judgment, yet it may be regarded as certain that Timaeus was better qualified for the task of learned compilation than for historical research, and held no distinguished place among the historians of Greece. His works have perished, only a few fragments remaining (Lübker).

ZOILUS, a Greek rhetorician, native of Amphipolis in Macedonia, in the time probably of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-247 B.C.), who is said by Vitruvius to have crucified him for his abuse of Homer. He won the name of Homeromastix, "the scourge of Homer," and was also known as κύων ῥητορικός, "the dog of rhetoric," on account of his biting sarcasm ; and his name (as in the case of the English Dennis) came to be used to signify in general a carping and malicious critic. Suidas mentions two works of his, written with the object of injuring or destroying the fame of Homer—(1) *Nine Books against Homer* ; and (2) *Censures on Homer* (Pauly).

[The facts contained in the above short notices are taken chiefly from Lübker's *Reallexikon des classischen Alterthums*, and the very copious and elaborate *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft*, edited by Pauly. I have here to acknowledge the kindness of Dr. Wollseiffen, Gymnasialdirektor in Crefeld, in placing at my disposal the library of the Crefeld Gymnasium, but for which these biographical notes, which were put together at the suggestion of Mr. Lang, could not have been compiled. CREFELD, 31*st July* 1890.]

THE END

Printed by R. & R. CLARK, *Edinburgh*

CLASSICAL LIBRARY—(*Continued*).

KTESIAS.—THE FRAGMENTS OF THE PERSIKA OF KTESIAS. By JOHN GILMORE, M.A. 8vo. 8s. 6d.

LIVY.—BOOKS XXI.-XXV. Translated by A. J. CHURCH, M.A., and W. J. BRODRIBB, M.A. Cr. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

PAUSANIAS.—DESCRIPTION OF GREECE. Translated with Commentary by J. G. FRAZER, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. [*In preparation.*

PHRYNICHUS.—THE NEW PHRYNICHUS; being a Revised Text of the Ecloga of the Grammarian Phrynichus. With Introduction and Commentary by Rev. W. G. RUTHERFORD, M.A., LL.D., Headmaster of Westminster. 8vo. 18s.

PINDAR.—THE EXTANT ODES OF PINDAR. Translated by ERNEST MYERS, M.A. Cr. 8vo. 5s.

THE NEMEAN ODES. By J. B. BURY, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin. 8vo. [*In the Press.*

PLATO.—PHÆDO. By R. D. ARCHER-HIND, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. 8vo. 8s. 6d.

PHÆDO. By W. D. GEDDES, LL.D., Principal of the University of Aberdeen. 8vo. 8s. 6d.

TIMAEUS. With Translation. By R. D. ARCHER-HIND, M.A. 8vo. 16s.

THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO. Translated by J. LL. DAVIES, M.A., and D. J. VAUGHAN, M.A. 18mo. 4s. 6d.

EUTHYPHRO, APOLOGY, CRITO, AND PHÆDO. Translated by F. J. CHURCH. 18mo. 4s. 6d.

PHÆDRUS, LYSIS, AND PROTAGORAS. Translated by J. WRIGHT, M.A. 18mo. 4s. 6d.

PLAUTUS.—THE MOSTELLARIA. By WILLIAM RAMSAY, M.A. Edited by G. G. RAMSAY, M.A., Professor of Humanity in the University of Glasgow. 8vo. 14s.

PLINY.—CORRESPONDENCE WITH TRAJAN. C. Plinii Caecilii Secundi Epistulæ ad Traianum Imperatorem cum Eiusdem Responsis. By E. G. HARDY, M.A. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

POLYBIUS.—THE HISTORIES OF POLYBIUS. Translated by E. S. SHUCKBURGH, M.A. 2 vols. Cr. 8vo. 24s.

TACITUS.—THE ANNALS. By G. O. HOLBROOKE, M.A., Professor of Latin in Trinity College, Hartford, U.S.A. With Maps. 8vo. 16s.

THE ANNALS. Translated by A. J. CHURCH, M.A., and W. J. BRODRIBB, M.A. With Maps. Cr. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

THE HISTORIES. By Rev. W. A. SPOONER, M.A., Fellow of New College, Oxford. 8vo. [*In the Press.*

THE HISTORY. Translated by A. J. CHURCH, M.A., and W. J. BRODRIBB, M.A. With Map. Cr. 8vo. 6s.

THE AGRICOLA AND GERMANY, WITH THE DIALOGUE ON ORATORY. Translated by A. J. CHURCH, M.A., and W. J. BRODRIBB, M.A. With Maps. Cr. 8vo. 4s. 6d.

THEOCRITUS, BION, AND MOSCHUS. Translated by A. LANG, M.A. 18mo. 4s. 6d.

*** Also an Edition on Large Paper. Cr. 8vo. 9s.

THUCYDIDES.—BOOK IV. A Revision of the Text, Illustrating the Principal Causes of Corruption in the Manuscripts of this Author. By Rev. W. G. RUTHERFORD, M.A., LL.D., Headmaster of Westminster. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

VIRGIL.—THE ÆNEID. Translated by J. W. MACKAIL, M.A., Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. Cr. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

XENOPHON.—Translated by H. G. DAKYNS, M.A. In four vols. Vol. I., containing "The Anabasis" and Books I. and II. of "The Hellenica." Cr. 8vo. 10s. 6d. [Vol. II. *in the Press.*

MACMILLAN AND CO., LONDON.